

PC Update

November 1998

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Reviews

Corel Print Office

Quilt-Pro 2

Comparing disk
cataloguing
programs

Features

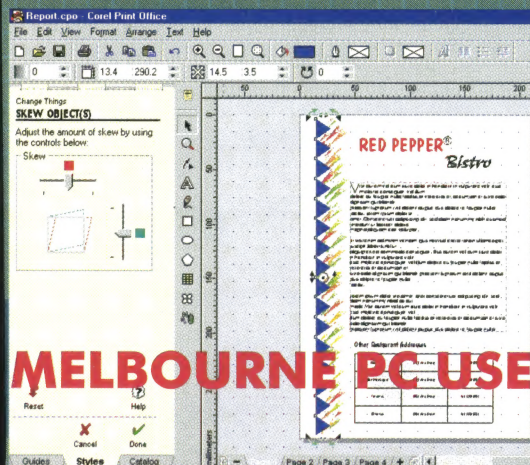
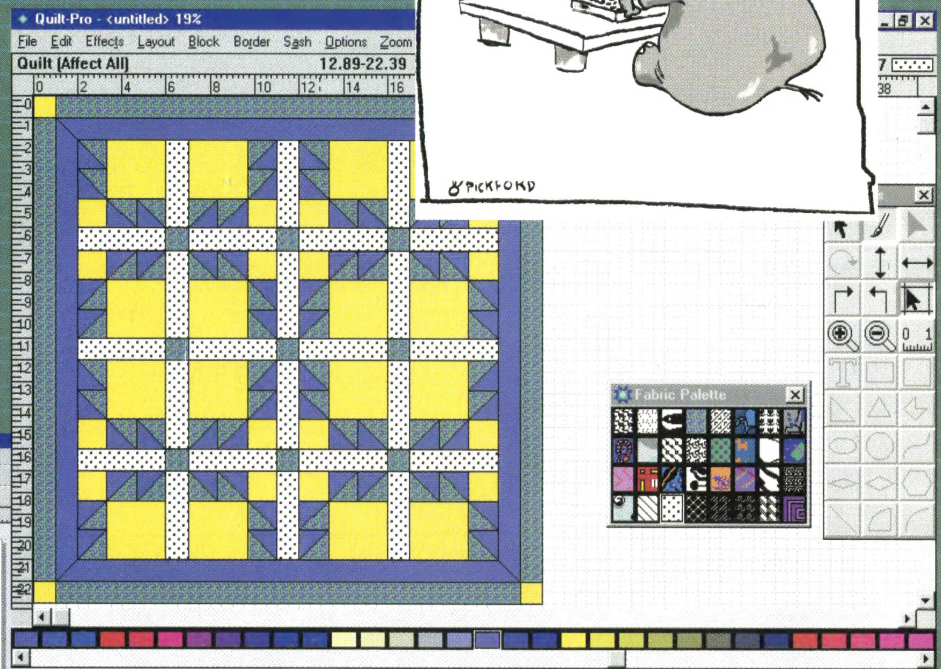
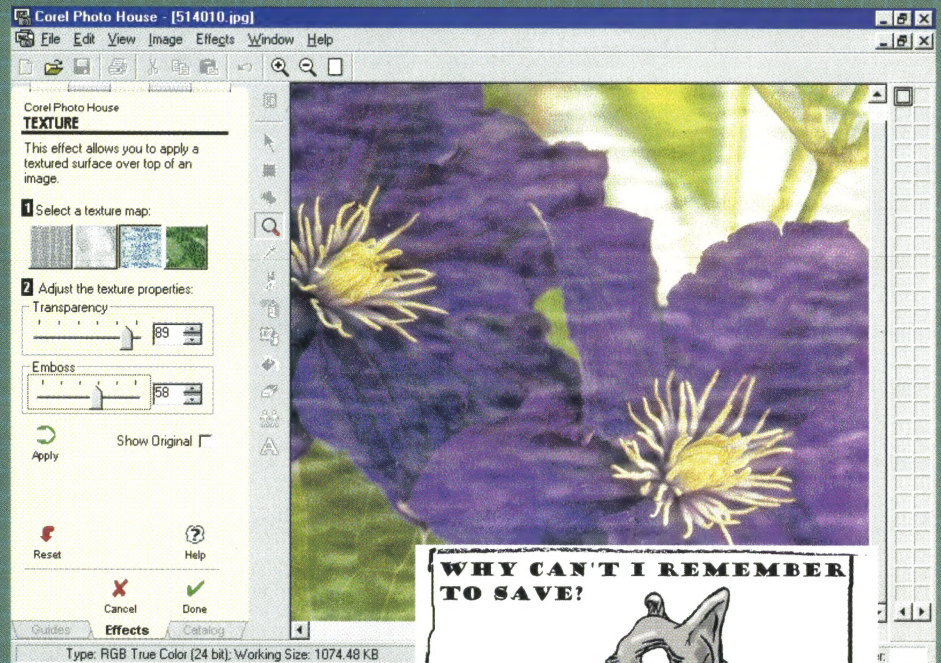
More helpful hints

Technology and

social change

Unemployed at 45

Just walking in the
rain: Getting not so
wet



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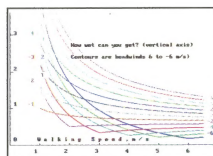
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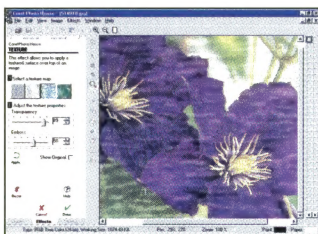
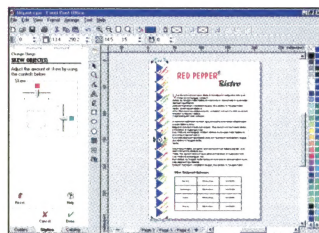
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1999				
February	4 Jan	6 Jan	8 Jan	29 Jan
March	1 Feb	3 Feb	5 Feb	26 Feb
April	8 Mar	10 Mar	12 Mar	2 Apr

Reviews

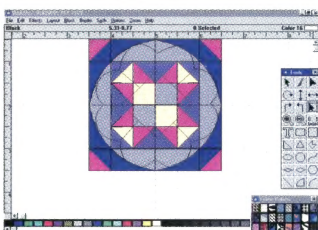
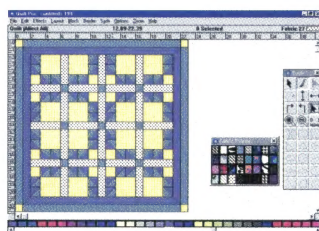
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Authors must present a balanced view of the subject matter, based on a reasonable period of use—if the article is overly critical they should submit a copy to the distributor or manufacturer for comment. Copies of such correspondence should accompany the submission.

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Melb PC directory

Office, membership, deliveries

27 Dorcas Street
South Melbourne VIC 3205
(9 am – 5 pm) **9699 6222**
Fax: **9699 6499**

PO Box 283
South Melbourne VIC 3205
Australia

Staff *office@melbpc.org.au*

Tricia Swan
Margaret Greer

First Aid (Help) line
(10 am – 3 pm) **9696 9200**

Management committee
committee@melbpc.org.au

President
Stan Johnstone 9578 3091 Fax
president@melbpc.org.au

Vice-President
Morris Tobias 9682 3122 BH
vice-president@melbpc.org.au

Treasurer
Bill Ford *treasurer@melbpc.org.au*

Secretary
John Swale *secretary@melbpc.org.au*

Members
Carol Daniels *cad@melbpc.org.au*
Joe Henry *joehenry@melbpc.org.au*
Brian Horman *brianh@melbpc.org.au*
Barry Martin *barmymar@melbpc.org.au*
Ash Nallawolla *ash@melbpc.org.au*
George Skarbek
gskarbek@melbpc.org.au

Online Services

Melb PC BBS
(16 lines, up to 28.8 kbps)
9699 6611

Internet Service
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max 33.6 kbps **9686 4506**
60 lines, up to 120 mins total, per day,
max 56 kbps (V.90) **8626 5000**
120 lines, up to 120 mins total, per day,
max 56 kbps (K56flex) **9934 9400**

Intranet Service
26 lines, controlled, unlimited access,
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<http://www.melbpc.org.au>

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Do not use the Internet for submissions without prior approval from the editor. Upload articles, reports and reviews to the BBS, as plain, unformatted (ASCII) text files or plain unformatted (ASCII) text files bundled in a ZIP file with accompanying graphics. Do not use long file names or upload self-extracting EXE files. Make sure you are in the PCUP file area, before you upload the file. Leave a message to All (not "Private") in the PC Update Discussion area. Submissions that conform to the above formatting requirements can also be sent by post, on a virus-free diskette, which will not be returned, to the Group's PO Box.

Editing. All articles are edited for style, spelling, grammar and length. Articles that may not be edited or that do not meet our standards, will be rejected.

Graphics. Supply graphics or screen shots, wherever possible, as colour, or black and white images, saved in one of the formats: PCX, BMP, TIF, WMF or EPS.

Rejections. Contact the editor if your submission is not published within four issues. Articles with long file names, self-extracting files or virus infections are rejected without notification. Other rejections are advised by phone or in writing.



Evolution, not revolution, or staying sane one step at a time

A new operating system, application upgrade, updated utilities, new hardware and drivers. If you're like me, your computer is in a constant state of evolution. Evolution is do-able, revolution is a recipe for disaster. Or as one of my favourite authors wrote, "shortcuts make for long delays".

I try to avoid making major changes when I'm working on deadline, but the deadlines come quickly around my house, so my good intentions aren't quite as useful as they could be.

I admit to taking the easy (quick and dirty) option, even though I know I shouldn't. Even though I know that every time I do, I'm putting my work, data and sanity at risk. I won't claim to follow all of these precautions, who'd believe it if I did. But, when I do follow them, I'm glad I did.

Change one variable at a time

This is my mantra. I know that if I only follow this basic rule, I will minimise the number of problems I create. I will also have a reasonable chance of undoing any significant damage. Computers can keep track of multiple changes in N-dimensions. The human brain has difficulty with any more than four. Besides keeping track of several changes made at one time, making multiple changes introduces another potential problem. Your computer system's current "state", is not a state function. Its status is not independent of the process used to bring about that state. Undoing one change is relatively easy, undoing two, three or more and returning your system to its previous state, with any precision is difficult.

Unless you backup

Before you install any new software or hardware, back up. Back up your entire system. Then check the backup to make sure you can restore your system to its current state. Only then should you install the new toy. It's tempting to only back up your operating system, or your operating system and your data, or your operating system, most used programs and your data. That's false

economy. Two or more gigabytes of programs, each of them tweaked just that little bit to suit your preferences, can take weeks or more to install.

Watch the clock

Sure, I know, you can install a new program in your sleep. You can whip out the old sound card and whack in a new one with one eye closed. Trust me. You will not be able to undo any problem that arises, if you're sleepy. Never, ever install software or hardware if you have been awake for more than 20 hours straight, or have already had two cups of coffee to keep you alert. If you're a lark, schedule the work for early in the day, owls can wait until after the sun goes down.

Know what comes next

When ever possible, schedule your changes after an important deadline, or with plenty of time to spare before an upcoming deadline. Just one minor problem when doing something as simple as installing a new printer can put a large dent in your schedule.

Read the box

If the minimum system requirements are 64 MB RAM, Pentium 200 and 75 MB free hard disk space, you are not going to be happy with the performance you get from a 486 with 8 MB RAM, and your chances of getting satisfactory performance, even if you can squeeze 75 MB of program in to 25 MB of hard drive, are slim at best.

Read the box (again)

Make sure your old programs will run with the new. If not all your programs, at least your critical applications. This is especially important when you are installing a new operating system.

RTFM

Yes, really. I mean it. RTFM, it won't be fun, but it will save you time and frustration.

Backup your new system

Once you've installed your new toy, and it's working to your satisfaction, even if it's not yet tweaked to the max, back it up. Don't wait until you've fiddled with it for a couple of weeks

and lost your preferred settings. Oh, and don't get rid of that original backup just yet. You may need it still, but if you've gone to the trouble of installing and tweaking the new setup, you don't want to have to go back over that ground again. Do you?

I don't claim that these precautions will protect you from down time, lost data or even protect what ever shreds of sanity you have left. But they might, and if they do, you'll be glad they did.

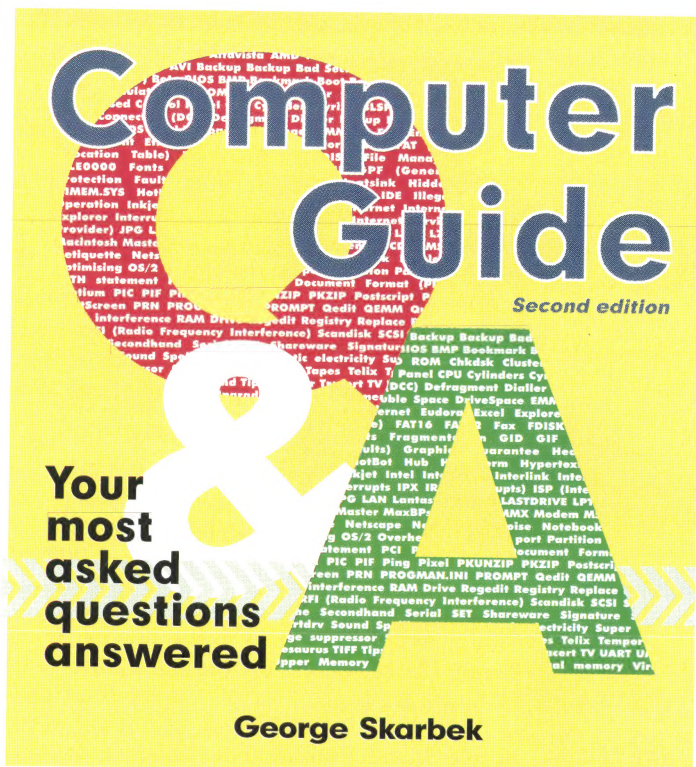
Down the (digital) local

A few months ago I wrote about *melbpc.general* taking on the characteristics of a digital campfire. Well, things have evolved since then and I now believe it has the makings of the digital local. Members drop in. Stay a while. Spin a yarn. Get some advice. Have a grizzle. Meander home, only to pop back in a day or two. And just like the real life local, you wouldn't believe the things we talk about at the digital local.

There's a fair bit of networking advice, modem tweaking, protocol discussion, software recommendations and Web site sightings, the sort of things you'd expect the fine, upstanding members of this august group to discuss. But there's also been talk of Viagra, polygamy (hmmm I wonder if there's a connection between these two?) and the most civilised discussion of politics ever witnessed, during the run up to the Federal election.

But the Great Huntsman Thread of 1998 is unquestionably the winner for education, entertainment and sheer fright value. If you followed the thread you will know that there are fewer arachnephiles than there arachnephobes active in the newsgroup. Duh, big surprise. You'll also have been treated to the "Best Huntsman Story Of All Time". In fact, I reckon that Colin's huntsman story is the funniest thing I've read in a long time. And it's something only subscribers to Melb PC's Internet service can enjoy. Hmmm, maybe there's a lesson in there somewhere.

Your most asked questions answered



George Skarbek, voted favourite author by *PC Update* readers in 1997, has written a second edition of his book *Computer Guide* — *Your most asked question answered*.

This book is based on material published in the weekly "Q&A" column in the computer section of *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The West Australian* and *The Courier Mail*. Also included are comprehensive articles originally written for Melb PC's award winning magazine, *PC Update*.

The questions and answers have been collated into 19 chapters and many answers have been considerably expanded. This edition has been extensively updated since the publication of the first volume in 1996. Numerous cross-references simplify searching, and several extensively researched articles are included.

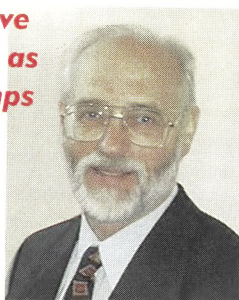
Even if this book fixes only one nagging problem, it will have been worth buying

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\$25
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Over 100 hints and tips have been added in this edition, as well as over 50 screen dumps

This book is aimed at everyone interested in personal computing, from beginners to experienced users, covering such broad fields as:

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SOFTWARE REVIEW

Corel Print Office

Info Box

Corel Print Office

Minimum system

- 486DX2-66 CPU
- Win 95 / NT 4.0
- 8 MB RAM for Win 95 (16 MB recommended)
- 16 MB RAM for Win NT
- SVGA
- CD-ROM
- Mouse or tablet
- 62 MB free hard disk space.

Availability / cost

Available from your local software reseller, otherwise contact Corel Customer Service
Ph: 1800 658 850.

RRP: \$139.95

**There is not really
much to say about
the Print Office
suite that I haven't
already said in my
Print House reviews**

The number of ways Corel finds to repackage the same old software programs would surely win it the prize for Most Persistent Marketing Effort. Remember my review of Print House Magic back in June 1998? Print House Magic Deluxe in August 1998? Now comes Corel Print Office, yet another package based around the Print House Magic programs. The difference this time is that the individual programs are fractionally later releases, and the graphics are aimed at a different market—business users.

The main program, Print Office, is a 3.1 version of Print House and includes new capabilities such as Web publishing, multiple page document support, the ability to turn off the ubiquitous Notebook, and snap-to-grid. Photo House is at version 2.1, although the only new feature I could find is the ability to switch the Notebook on and off. Colleagues & Contacts 1.1 is really Corel Family & Friends in disguise, and retains many (if not all) of its problems and weaknesses; even down to retention of the same field names (e.g. Family Name). Apart from these changes, the weighty assortment of clipart, graphics and sample documents are more business-orientated, with a series of stationery theme sets and business identity clipart offering good value for businesses.

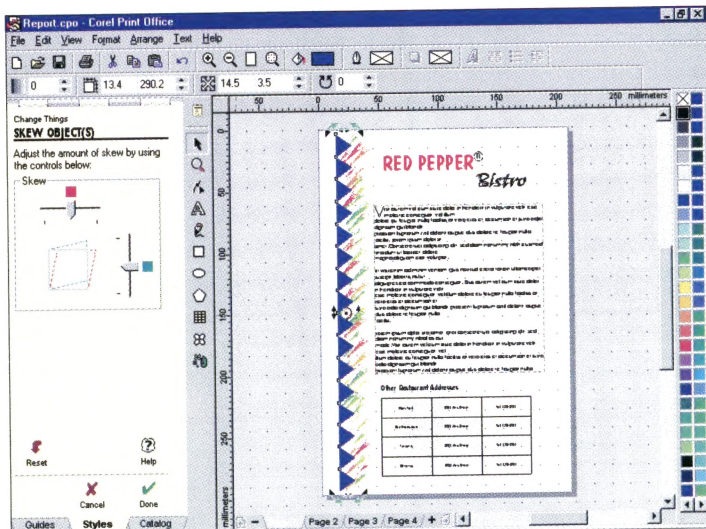


Figure 1. Skewing an object in Print Office

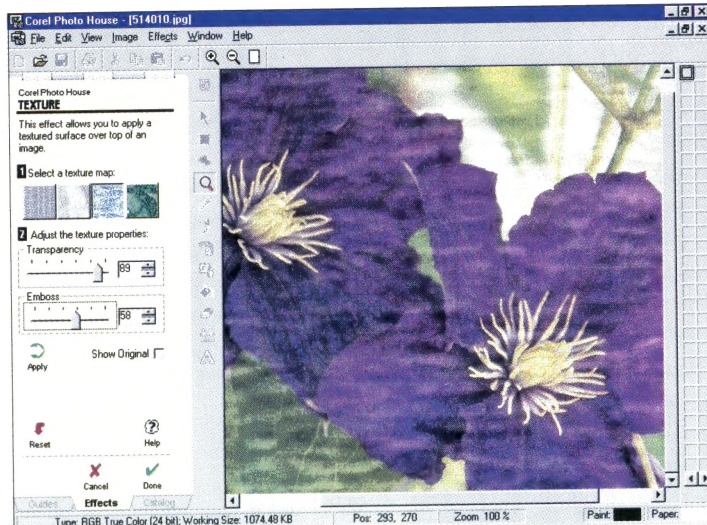


Figure 2. Applying a special effect in Photo House

Bernadette
Houghton



**the graphics offer
excellent value**

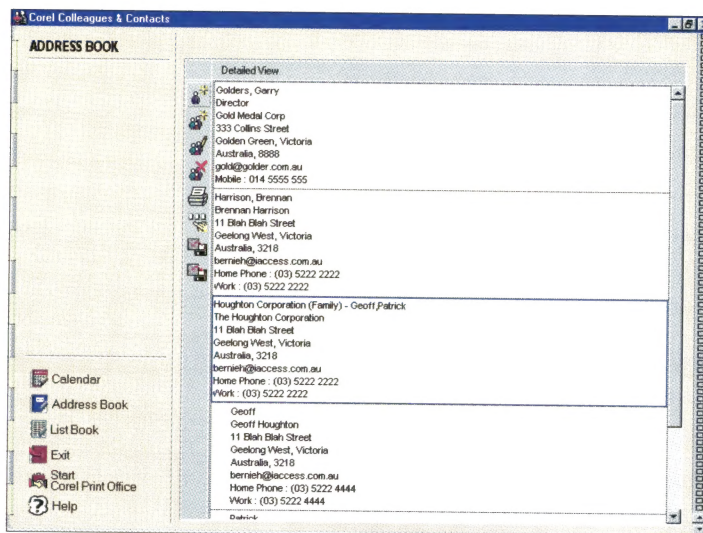


Figure 3. Colleagues & Contacts' address book

There is not really much to say about the Print Office suite that I haven't already said in my Print House reviews. It's worth mentioning, though, that Corel has aimed Print Office at small businesses where users have limited desktop publishing skills and limited time and money to produce

professional printed materials. Ideally, from Corel's point of view, Print Office will act as a stepping stone to Corel's more advanced graphic applications such as CorelDraw and Corel PHOTO-PAINT, once users have become proficient enough to move on.

My verdict for Print Office remains the

same as for the Print Magic series. To recap—Print Office is a very good graphics program, Photo House is a good but basic image-editor, and Colleagues & Contacts is a bit of a lightweight. And, as always with Corel products, the graphics offer excellent value. □

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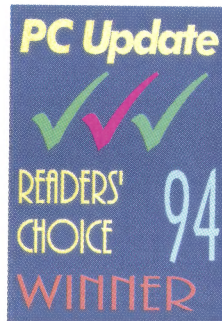
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Morris Tobias has been a member and long-time supporter of Melb PC since 1987. Hundreds of members have benefited from his expertise.



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Quilt-Pro 2

Info Box

Quilt-Pro 2

Minimum system

- Windows 3.1
- 4 MB RAM
- CD-ROM
- 12 MB free hard disk space
- Printer.

Availability / cost

Available from
The Craft Mailbox
Pty Ltd
PO Box 42
Blackburn South
VIC 3130
Ph: (03) 9894 1691
Fax: (03) 9894 7836

\$199 plus \$4.95 P&H

Interested in patchwork and quilting? If so, you'll find Quilt-Pro 2 takes all the drudgery out of the preparation stage. It's fascinating to watch quilts taking shape before your eyes, and you can experiment with different designs and colours in a very few clicks. Once you've settled on a design, Quilt-Pro tells you exactly how much fabric you'll need, and even prints out the templates for your patches.

Quilt-Pro ships with an extensive library of ready-made blocks, border and sash designs, fabrics and quilt stencils. So, if you're not too confident about your design skills, it is easy to base your masterpiece on existing library elements. If you're more adventurous, you can customise the library designs or create your own designs from scratch. And if you haven't used a computer before, not to worry; Quilt-Pro's User's Manual includes a tutorial that assumes no prior computer knowledge and describes each step in precise detail.

First, some terminology

Quilts consist of blocks—usually squares—joined together, with each block comprising a series of “patches” in different fabrics. Individual blocks may be bordered by “sashes”, and the whole bounded by “borders”. Quilting stitches—either outline, or decorative hearts, flowers and so on—secure the quilt top to the backing fabric and inner batting.

it works

beautifully...

and is fun to use

How Quilt-Pro works

The first step in creating your quilt is to design the blocks. Quilt-Pro has a nice range of drawing tools, encompassing squares, circles, hexagons, polygons, diamonds and so on, which work just like standard drawing tools. Better, actually, as you can also rotate shapes while you're drawing them. Patch Guidelines help you organise the patches within each block, and a snap-to-grid feature ensures your patches align exactly. When you're happy with your block layouts, you can colour in the patches with either solid colours or fabric swatches. If you wish, you can apply quilt stencils on top of each block (to represent the quilting stitches).

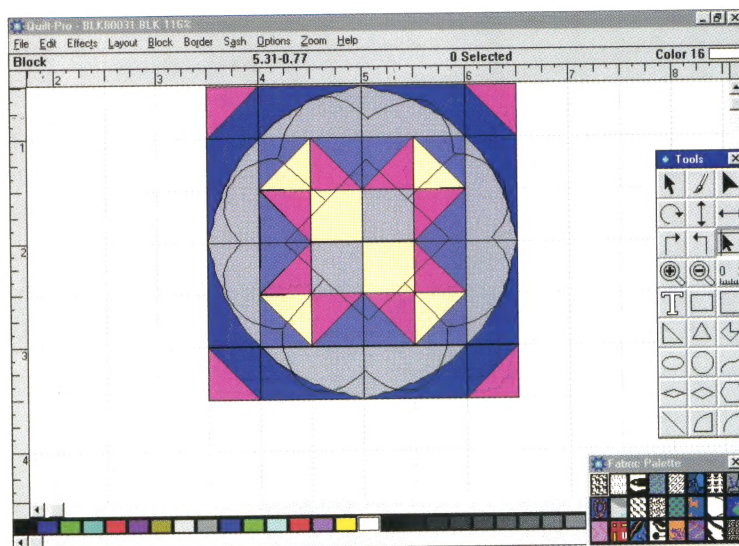


Figure 1. Designing a block

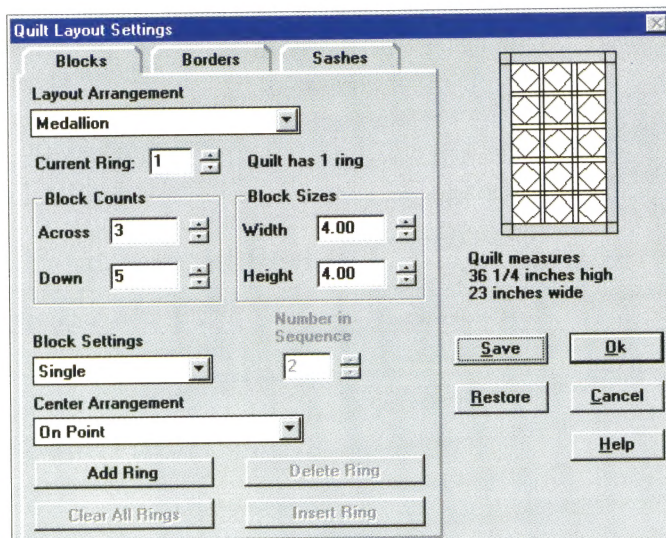


Figure 2. Choosing the quilt layout

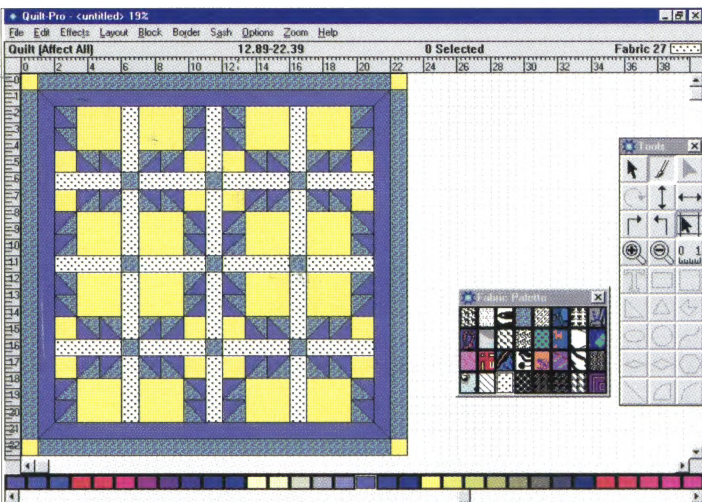


Figure 3. A finished quilt

When you've completed your block designs, you lay out your quilt—decide on the arrangement and number of blocks, whether to include sashes and borders, if so how many, and so on. Once you've done this, you can continue experimenting with different colours, fabrics and block orientations. If you choose, Quilt-Pro will colour corresponding patches in all similar blocks at the same time. Change the fabric in one patch, for example, and the fabric in the corresponding patches changes too. Similarly, rotate one block, and all similar blocks rotate. You can turn this feature off, if you wish, so that your manipulations affect only individual patches or blocks. Once you're satisfied with your quilt, Quilt-Pro calculates how much of each kind of fabric you'll need, and prints out templates (including seam allowances) for your patches and quilt stencils for the quilting stitches.

You can use Quilt-Pro to design appliqued quilts—in which you sew patches in designs such as flowers, leaves and hearts onto a background fabric. There is a range of ready-made appliqued blocks, or you can create your own shapes using Quilt-Pro's Bezier tool. Once you've joined Bezier curves into closed shapes, you fill them with colours and fabrics and so on, just like standard

quilts. Unlike standard patches, applique patches can overlap each other, and Quilt-Pro has a series of stacking commands, so you can change the order in which patches lie on top of each other.

Assessment

I'm very impressed with Quilt-Pro. It's amazingly easy to use and really does take much of the pain out of quilt designing. Within an hour of starting the tutorial, I had my quilt design completed, knew what kind and colour of fabrics to use, how much fabric to buy and had the templates in hand for my patches. All I had left to do was to purchase the fabrics, then start cutting them up and piecing them together.

Quilt-Pro is one of the neatest programs I've reviewed; it works beautifully, takes all the hard work out of quilt designing, saves on material wastage and is fun to use. □

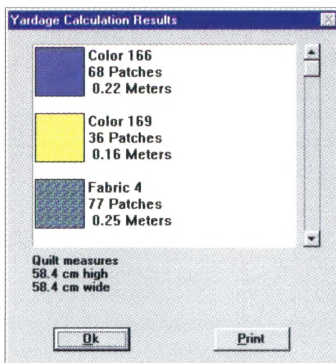


Figure 4. Fabric calculation results

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Bob Burt - PC Update February 1998

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YOU WILL LEARN!





Microsoft
Visual Basic
Professional Edition

Seeing the Basics: Visual Basic 6.0 has arrived

This column provides techniques, tips, and tricks to help you gain familiarity and experience with MS Visual Basic, a popular language that enables you to write both Windows and World Wide Web applications quickly.

This month's column focuses on Microsoft Visual Basic 6.0, the latest release of the language that, when it first appeared in the early nineties, revolutionised Windows programming.

Today, Visual Basic has evolved into a mature integrated development environment (IDE) that can be used to develop not only conventional Windows applications but also Dynamic HTML-based Web applications, ActiveX controls, and Active Documents, plus a lot more.

The HyperText Markup Language (HTML) has become the standard language for creating Web pages. Dynamic HTML (DHTML) is a series of enhancements to HTML. DHTML can be used to change the contents of a Web page dynamically after the page has been loaded, without needing to go back to the server first.

Three editions of VB 6.0

VB 6.0 is available in three editions: Learning, Professional, and Enterprise.

The Learning edition is suitable for anyone looking for an introduction to professional Windows programming for either the Windows or Windows NT platforms. A major component of this edition's documentation is the multimedia CD-ROM titled *Learn VB Now*, which consists of video lessons and associated practical work.

The Professional edition is for serious hobbyists or commercial developers interested in building robust Windows and Internet programs to run on stand-alone PCs or in client/server environments.

The Enterprise edition is designed for corporate programming teams. As such, it contains features like Microsoft's Visual SourceSafe 6.0 for controlling source code amongst team members, as well as a collection of database tools for visually designing enterprise-wide tables, views, SQL queries, stored procedures for Microsoft SQL Server 6.5+, Oracle 7.3.3+ databases, and so on.

I will focus on the Professional edition.

What's new in VB 6.0

In a short article like this, it's impossible to adequately cover all the new features in VB 6.0. The following list provides just a few examples of what's now available:

- ADO (ActiveX Data Objects) is a new technology that's used for both local and remote data access. ADO objects, which can be created using the new Data Environment Designer, can act as data sources for objects placed on VB forms or in reports. Alternatively, they can be programmatically controlled at run time.
- There's also a new ADO Data control that is OLEDB-aware. OLEDB is a collection of interfaces that applications can use to access information from both relational and non-relational data sources.
- Enhanced performance of applications and components via the use of the new Visual C++ 6.0 optimised native code compiler.
- The new Data Report Designer is a report generator that can be used to produce traditional hardcopy reports as well as ones exported in HTML

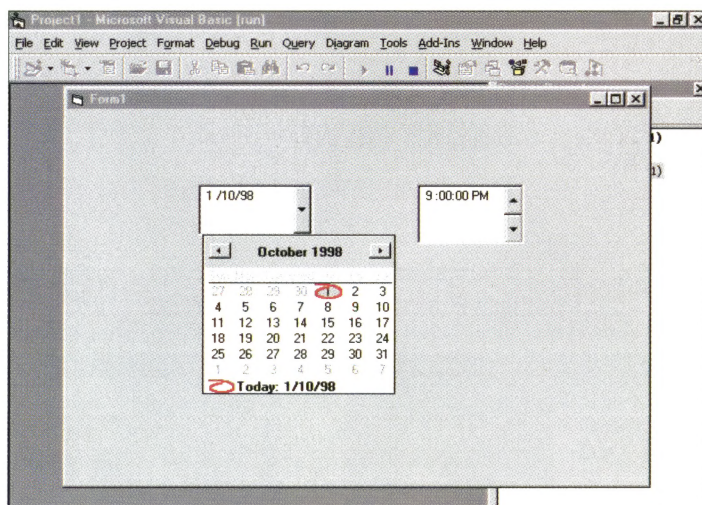


Figure 1. The new "DateTimePicker" control makes it easy to enter dates and times in a VB application

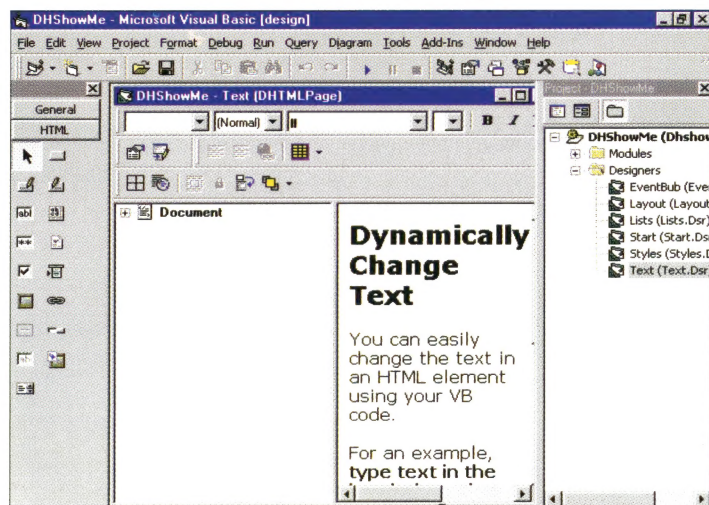


Figure 2. The new WYSIWYG Dynamic HTML Page Designer in action

format. The latter type of report can then be conveniently distributed over the Net to a wide audience.

- The inclusion of other new controls like the "DateTimePicker" control, which provides users with access to a drop-down calendar or the time (see Figure 1). This control represents a quick and straightforward way of entering dates and times within VB applications. Its "Format" property is used to change between the calendar and time settings. An example of another new control is "ImageCombo", which works like a normal combo box except that images can now be added to its list of items.
- Some of VB's existing controls have also been enhanced with new objects, collections, properties, events, and methods. In addition, there are some new features affecting controls in general, for example, "Dynamic Control Addition". This means that controls can be programmatically added to, or removed from, forms at run time. For the latest information about both new and enhanced controls, refer to VB 6.0's online help. As well, there's a set of VB sample applications available which can be run to demonstrate the latest innovations in controls.
- The new Dynamic HTML Page Designer offers a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) environment for creating dynamic HTML applications (see Figure 2). And it's possible to add HTML controls to the VB toolbox whenever they're required. Examples of some of the HTML controls available, and what they can be used for, include the "Button" control—for adding a command button to a page; "Submit Button" control—used on HTML forms for transmitting data back to the server; "Text Field" and "Text Area" controls—for incorporating single and multi line text input fields respectively on pages; and the "Hyperlink" control—for creating hyperlinks on pages.
- The Internet Information Server (IIS) Application Designer for building dynamic browser-based applications consisting of both HTML and VB code.
- Microsoft Developer Network (MSDN) CDs, which ship with all three editions of VB. These contain

comprehensive online documentation about all aspects of VB development. Of interest too are the *VB Programmer's Guide*—a manual on VB programming techniques; the *Component Tools Guide*—information for developing and deploying ActiveX-based components; and the *Data Access Guide*—the steps involved in accessing data programmatically with VB

- A range of new language features have been added to VB. For example, there's a set of new string functions, with FormatPercent, MonthName, and StrReverse being just three examples.
- Enhancements to the Setup Wizard, which is now referred to as the Package and Deployment Wizard. Changes have also been incorporated into the Data Form and Application Wizards.

What to expect

The next few issues of "Seeing the Basics" will look at some of VB 6.0's key features in more depth. There'll also be reviews of a couple of VB 6.0 books to help you make the most of this latest release. □

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"Just walking in the rain" "Getting not so wet"

Indulging in this pursuit recently brought to mind the oft-raised question—How fast should you walk to minimise the hydration of the person? Maybe that's a suitable subject to help the team fill the magazine!

Let us simplify the problem by considering you, not as a biped, but as a parallelopiped, orthogonal of course, just in from the planet Geometrica. You are 1.5 m high, 0.5 m wide and

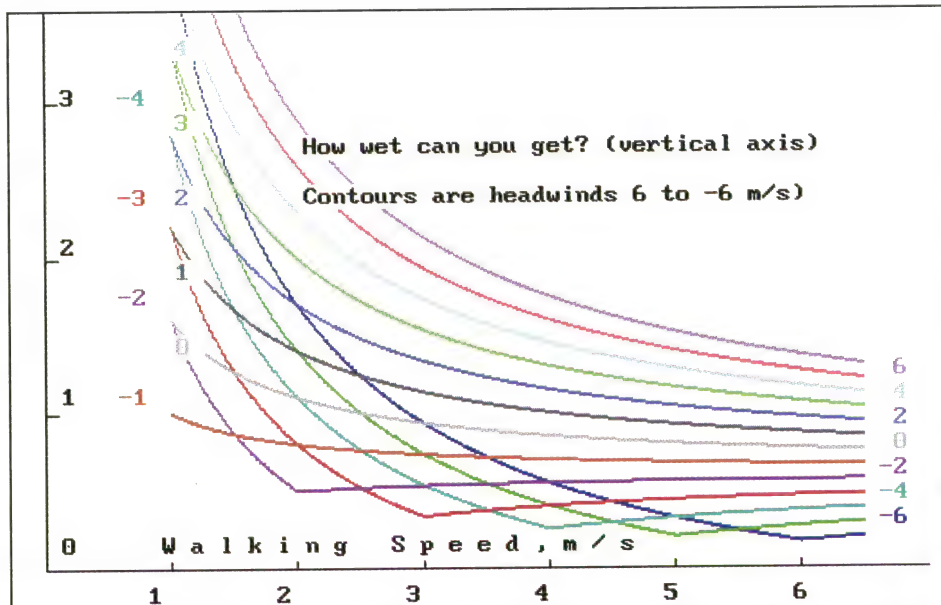
0.25 m thick ("ere, 'o you callin' thick?") Your frontal area is six times your plan area (= height / thickness); this ratio (RF) is really the only figure we need. We will assume that one unit of rain is falling on your (top) plan area each second and that the vertical speed (VS) of the raindrops is 10 m/s. This depends on the size of the drops—the bigger they are, the faster they fall. Pity this didn't apply to more of the entrepreneurs! Normal walking speed (WS) is about 2 m/s and we will

consider a range of headwind speeds (HW) up to 6 m/s and down to -6 m/s (tailwind). We'll look at side winds later.

Firstly, the top surface will receive rain at the same rate irrespective of HW or WS. To determine the amount on the front, or back, surface, we need the apparent angle at which the drops approach. The horizontal component equals (WS + HW) and the vertical component is of course VS; the ratio of

```
'rainwalk.bas
SCREEN 9: CLS 'EGA screen
WINDOW (0, -.4)-(9, 3.6)
RF = 6 'ratio front/top
RS = 3 'ratio side/top
VS = 10 'rain fall speed
r1 = RF/VS 'calculate once
r2 = RS/VS
SW = 0 'side wind
FOR HW = -6 TO 6 'headwind
FOR WS = 1 TO 6.5 STEP .01
'wetting rate per sec, wr
wr = 1 + ABS(r1 * (WS+HW))
wr = wr + ABS(r2 * SW)
wet = wr / VS 'per metre
'for HW=0 use col. 7(grey)
PSET (WS, wet), HW + 7
NEXT WS 'walking speed
NEXT HW
DO: LOOP WHILE INKEY$ = ""
```

Listing 1



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be prepared with an umbrella, or have another beer

these gives the tangent of the angle ($\tan = (WS + HW) / VS$). If we, notionally, extend the top surface forward to intercept the rain that will hit the front face, we can estimate the amount easily. The ratio (VR) of the "veranda" area to that of the top surface is RF times the above tangent (sketch a side view if you don't believe me) and the total incident rain will be $(1 + VR)$. The time taken to walk one metre is $(1 / WS)$ and you will receive $(1 + RF * (WS + HW) / VS) / WS$ units of refreshing rain water for each metre progress to your goal.

The QBasic code calculates and plots the wetting (per metre) against walking speed for various head/tailwind speeds. General conclusions can be drawn, which agree with instinctive beliefs. With headwinds, it is best to run as fast

as you can since minimising exposure time outweighs greater wetting each second. With tailwinds of 2 m/s or more, it is best to walk at the wind speed so that you only receive one unit on the top surface, since walking faster will cause a small increase due to rain on the front and slower will wet the back more quickly since time exposure increases. From calm to 2 m/s tailwind, maintain normal walking pace as the benefits of running are marginal and slowing will increase exposure time and saturation.

A proviso should be put on running as it increases the risks of falling, colliding or having a heart attack. Either be prepared with an umbrella, or have another beer. With the program written, it is easy to investigate the effects of finer drops (lower VS) or a greater ratio of frontal area to plan area, both of which accentuate the amount hitting the front when running into it. With rain falling at 5 m/s, there is a small advantage, in a 1 m/s tail wind, in slowing down to this but it doesn't affect the general conclusions. With side wind (SW) components, the side will be constantly bombarded, independent of walking speed. The

ratio of side area to top area (RS) is less at 3:1, but we need to add $(RS * SW / VS)$ to the time rate of wetting and running faster to minimise exposure time will still be desirable. However, examining plots for side winds up to 6 m/s doesn't provide any basis to change the general conclusions.

Purists might wish to deal with a more normally shaped individual but would need the silhouette area of the body for all possible apparent angles of rain approach and would need to calculate the apparent rain velocity. I doubt it would alter the conclusions. I hope this illustrates, albeit in a fairly simple way, the value of a graphical presentation of results in a situation where a number of factors are variously influencing an outcome. The more complex the problem, the more useful are graphics in getting a balanced overall view. With more challenging problems it is worth looping the program and getting keyboard input to increment or decrement any of the variables, clear the screen and re-plot instantly. If you print the variables on screen, you can run through all combinations in rapid order and select an optimal solution to the particular problem. □

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"The Perfect 5300 is the fastest PC we've tested to date, even beating the mammoth 333Mhz Pentium II from Dell tested this month. If bang is what you want, then look no further."

April issue, 1998 PC World

"Ultimate has consistently submitted machines that are among the fastest on test. It is also gathering a reputation for providing machines are good value for money, and this month the Perfect 5233 makes it concrete by snagging the coveted PC @uthority Value Award."

April issue, 1998 PC@UTHORITY

"This month, Ultimate Computing Technology surprised us in two ways. Where we expected a maximum of a Pentium II/300 in this Labs, Ultimate not only managed to submit a new 350MHz CPU with startling performance, but is also provided a solid features specification. Another important feature of budget machines is the upgrade potential and the Perfect doesn't disappoint."

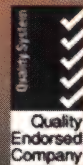
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More helpful hints

- If you wish to remove all documents from your Startup menu in Windows 95 then right-click on the Task bar, click Properties, Start Menu Programs and click on the Clear button.
- If you are working at night and do not wish to disturb your family with Windows noises, then to mute all Windows 95 sounds, click on the speaker icon on the Task bar and check the Mute box. Remember to un-check in the morning.
- The Windows 95 registry files should be backed up at regular intervals. From the DOS box, when in your destination folder, type
XCOPY C:\WINDOWS*.DA? /H
- Have you ever looked for help in the Windows 95 Help and did not find what you were after? Microsoft sells

a book called *Microsoft Windows 95 Resource Kit* for \$100. This book is thicker than the phone directory and has a lot of additional information about Windows 95. However, instead of purchasing it, anyone who has installed Windows 95 from a CD-ROM has that full book, with diagrams and screen dumps, on their CD-ROM. It is not copied onto the hard disk during installation, but can be copied onto your hard disk or accessed from the CD-ROM. The file is called Win95rk and is in a folder called \Admin\Reskit\Helpfile on the CD-ROM. Microsoft does not appear to advertise this.

- To make a shortcut to any program just right-click on the program from Windows Explorer and then drag that shortcut onto the desktop.

- When you have Windows Explorer open, pressing the F3 key will bring up the Find dialog box immediately. This is very handy if you don't have the Windows key on your keyboard.
- It is quite easy to copy text from a DOS program and use that text in a Windows 95 program. Run the DOS program in a window, not full screen. Press Alt+Enter if it appears in full screen and you can adjust the size of the window and text. Click on the Mark icon (that's the dotted line box) and highlight the text that you want, then click on the Copy icon (you cannot use Ctrl+C in this case). Then open the Windows application and use Edit, Paste (or Ctrl+V) to import that DOS text.
- If searching for some elusive piece of information try www.dogpile.com. This is a meta-search engine that submits your query, in the correct format, to numerous search engines.
- When searching the Web using Altavista you can limit the search to Australian sites by adding host:.au in the search field.
- To see how many bytes you have received via the Internet in any session, just move your cursor over the modem icon on the task bar and pause for a few seconds. Most diallers have this minimised icon there by default.
- If you write long e-mail letters, use your word processor as it has timed backups, spell check, possibly grammar checking and many other useful extras. Also, you won't use up your online time. When finished, just cut & paste into the e-mail program.
- If you are running Windows 95 and don't have the Win key on your keyboard, you can still get to your desktop quickly by right-clicking once on the Task bar and selecting Minimise All Windows.
- In Word, after you have loaded an existing document, you can go straight to where you left off last time by pressing Shift+F5.





Changing your password

You must use Telnet to change your password. Telnet comes as part of your normal Win 95/98 installation. Windows 3.x users will need to get one of a number of Telnet programs available on the Internet and the our BBS (e.g. WS-Telnet).

For Windows 95/98

When online select START | RUN then
TELNET emu.melbpc.org.au

This, in effect, makes a second connection to the Melb PC Internet system, from which you will be prompted for your username and then your current password.

For other Telnet applications, you need to make a single, separate connection to the host name:

emu.melbpc.org.au

Once you have established a Telnet connection you will see a short menu.

From this menu select "p" to change your password ("e" to exit).

After selecting "p" you will be prompted to enter your existing password.

Then you will be prompted to enter your new password, and again. The second entry is a double check.

Once you have done that, you will be disconnected immediately, and your old password is no longer active.

Fromj then on you must use your new password to access the Melb PC Internet system, including your e-mail account. If you have set up any programs to log on automatically using your system password, you will have to change it in those programs, too.

Notes

Your username is the name you use to log on to the system. If your e-mail address is *frednurk@melbpc.org.au*, your username is *frednurk*.

The "working" password file is copied from the master password file once each hour. So your new password may not be active in the lag time between the time you change it and when the next regular copy of the the master file is made.

Passwords are case-sensitive (JOKE, JoKE, Joke, joke, jokE, are all different password). You must always type it exactly as entered when you first set it. Passwords may include numbers, other ASCII characters, such as &+#!~ etc, and should be between six and ten characters long. □

The BASIC and Tiny Tiger control computers arrive in Australia

Tigers for Superb Control

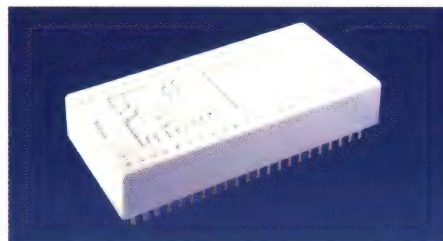
Tigers are small, sealed modules a little larger than a matchbox, but providing inexpensive computer control for a range of applications.

Inside the 44 pin module is a powerful microprocessor running at 20 Mhz, dual UART-driven serial ports, 4 channel, 10-bit ADC, real-time clock/calendar with alarm, a complex 16-bit counter/timer system for pulse generation and measurement and two PWM channels. The Tiger supports an expanded address system accessing 1920 I/O bits.

There are two modules in production:

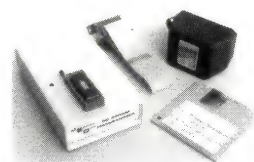
- BASIC Tiger, 44mm by 63mm by 12mm can have up to 4 MB of FLASH and 2 MB of CMOS RAM, with 38 I/O lines;
- Tiny Tiger, 28mm by 60mm by 11mm, with up to 512 kB FLASH, 512 kB RAM, and 36 universal I/O lines. (A 128K FLASH, 128KRAM Tiny Tiger is \$A162)

The emphasis is EASY PROGRAMMING. Tigers are programmed in compiled BASIC, with a W95/98/NT editing screen for entering the program, compiling it, and then down-loading it to the FLASH in the Tiger via an RS232 port. The program can then be single stepped, and variables examined remotely from the same user screen interface. The Tiger is fast and flexible, and handling 8, 16 and 32 bit integers as well as 64 bit REAL. (FP SIN takes 3 milliseconds!) **JED is producing a local, 11cm by 15cm Tiger control board with 24 IN, 24 OUT, LCD display and JBUS. Call for details.**



\$300 PROM Programmer

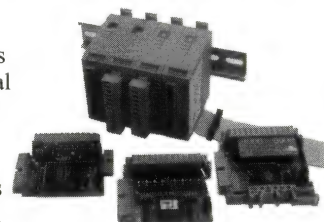
This programmer plugs into a PC's printer port and automatically writes PROMs up to 8MB.



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CPU (Club President's Update)

It's amazing how the months slip by so quickly, and it's quite a shock to find that it is time to write this column once again. For that matter, the year also has slipped by quickly, and suddenly I find there is only one more column to be written this year.

I often have the opportunity to read what the Presidents in other user groups write, and admire the way they cover a range of esoteric subjects. With so many activities at Melb PC changing and developing, I'm afraid I must limit myself to mundane matters just to keep our members informed on what is happening. Besides, as Carol Daniels does an excellent job with her editorials, it is unnecessary for me to philosophise.

V.90—it has happened!

The promised additional lines finally arrived from Telstra, and are currently running under the latest beta release of the V.90 firmware on the additional PortMaster box. The new number is 8626 5000—yes that is an "8" as the first digit.

Volunteer of the month

November — Bernadette Houghton

Bernadette Houghton is well known to *PC Update* readers with her regular software reviews. She describes herself as a self-confessed software junkie, originally cutting her teeth on shareware by buying up disks and reviewing the software just for the fun of it.

Bernie was originally a librarian, and then after gaining a Graduate Diploma in Computing had a career change to internal auditing; spending half her time working on computer-related audits and the other half on non-computer efficiency audits.

Although she joined Melb PC back in 1991, it wasn't until after the birth of her first child that she had the time to sit down and write her first article "The Wonderful World of Shareware" back in October 1993. Since then she

As I write, I believe this is beta-version 49 of the firmware currently installed, but quite possibly a later version will be available by the time you read this. Whether you have changed your modem to V.90 or not, connections to date suggest that it is slightly more stable and faster than the k56flex firmware used on the earlier PortMasters. (Don't you like the spelling of all these new software and hardware products that have capital letters in the middle of their names?)

Because of the continued beta-testing by the manufacturers, we have been asking for feedback from our users to learn of their experiences. Ultimately all the PortMasters will be upgraded to the same level of firmware providing the same performance on all the 56 kbps lines.

There is no extra charge!

Apparently there is some confusion among some members about V.90 and what it means. Put simply, it is a new international standard for communication using modems over phone lines,

has graduated to reviewing software with a total of 95 articles/reviews published in *PC Update*—many of them written with a sleeping baby on her lap.

Bernie's first PC was a 286, which is still in good use albeit after many upgrades, and now her main working machine is now a 233 Pentium with 32 MB RAM.

Living in Geelong, she doesn't often make it to monthly meetings or SIGs. However she really enjoys being involved with Melb PC, not only because she gets to review lots of software, but because it's has provided a wonderful opportunity to make some great friends.

Bernie's life outside Melb PC? Apart from her family with two mischievous boys and a very tolerant husband, she does occasional computer consultancy work and as much cross stitching as she can manage to fit in. □

and supersedes the interim k56flex and x2 protocols that individual manufacturers released previously.

Unlike some other providers, with Melb PC there is no additional charge for accessing any of the 56K modems, and once connected every-thing else is just the same for everyone. The only increase in speed you will notice is between your computer and Melb PC for downloading. The Internet beyond Melb PC will still respond at the same speed, and this speed is always dependent on the slowest working section in the chain of links to the distant server.

For this reason, users who take full advantage of our online services will obtain the most benefit, as the final link to your computer is often the only one affected.

Similarly there is no extra charge for the Intranet (call it "Internal Internet" if you like) where additional access time is available daily to download your mail and news, and to use the online services. It's all there to add to what we can offer at no extra cost, and so simple to access by just changing the phone number to 9696 5644. These 26 lines are ready to be used, and this free service currently is under-utilised by our subscribers.

No gas, and then no electricity

In the middle of the week when Melbourne was affected by the gas shortage, Melb PC was without electricity due to a local failure in the South Melbourne area.

Users of the BBS and the Internet were immediately disconnected as the modems at Melb PC run directly from the mains, and not via the UPS (uninterruptible power supplies). The reason for this is twofold—firstly it reduces the loading on the UPS and enables the main equipment to close files automatically while powered from the UPS, thus reducing possible corruption to files and mail. Secondly, it stops anyone connecting, thus saving the cost of wasted calls.

answer all their questions clearly and completely.

The office staff do not have the time or the expertise to answer technical queries. We have had members repeatedly ring individual office staff with their problems which may be of a nature outside Melb PC—unfortunately we cannot be involved in social service activities even though we are aware that some see us fulfilling that role.

In a recent episode, **John Morris** and I visited a member in an outer suburb who had made repeated phone calls to the office, to many dial help volunteers, and then to several members of the committee. Although he had been given successful help several times, and even visited previously, John and I again worked through his problems and were then obliged to make it quite clear that we were unable to provide further help of this nature.

Specialist trainers required

Melb PC wants to keep a team of trainers in the full range of subjects, and presently we do have a particular need for specialist trainers in the following topics:

- Windows NT 4.0
- The Basics of Programming
- Visual Basic Programming

If you are interested and suitably experienced, please contact the training co-ordinator, **Lynn Pollock** in writing care of the office, or direct by e-mail to lynn@melbpc.org.au outlining your experience in the particular subject.

George Skarbek's book

Just released is the latest edition of **George Skarbek's Computer Guide**. I was lucky enough to see the first copy of this book produced in less than 24 hours from electronic copy sent to Melb PC member **Kevin Mack's** company, Documents on Call. Another of our regular advertisers, Worsley Press, also produces books intended for short and long runs.

It certainly opened my eyes to see just how quickly even very short runs of books can be produced without the need for making plates and complicated setups, and then having long print runs to minimise the cost of each book. *PC Update* production manager **Peter Smith** designed the cover, **Robin Howells** did the proof reading, and so the book was created using the skills of several Melb PC members.

On my bookshelves I have copies of books produced by four Melb PC members, and with the technology so readily available to us all, the ease and cost of producing books will make it so much easier for others to follow.

George's book is advertised in this edition of *PC Update*, together with a special offer to Melb PC members. On the back cover is the claim "Even if this book fixes only one nagging problem, it will have been worth buying". I've started reading from page one and am currently working steadily through each example—maybe any problems I had were not nagging, but I've picked up many good ideas already.

A final word on Internet browsers

Many subscribers have installed the Melb PC Internet Kit over the past two

years, which was based on Microsoft Internet Explorer v3. Both Netscape v4 and Internet Explorer v4 have many additional features, and most importantly auto-proxy server settings.

For Melb PC to distribute these new versions of the browser programs, would have meant creating a set of 22 or more diskettes, or the expense of a CD-ROM with a comparatively short manufacturing run. Most of the popular commercial magazines feature a CD-ROM stuck on their front covers, and the simplest method of upgrading your existing software is to install an unconfigured version of one or both of these browsers onto your computer. These installations will search your machine for earlier versions or other Internet software, and then copy all settings through into the later version. This is well worthwhile, particularly with the need for auto-proxy server settings.

The new Melb PC Internet setup master (MPCISM.EXE) will help you reconfigure your installation if you have any problems, although it is only suitable for Windows 95/98 and cannot be used with Windows 3.x or Windows NT. This is available from the shareware library (Melb 9192) or can be downloaded from the BBS (as MPCISM.ZIP). Instructions are included, and a recommended manner of setting up individual icons for each Internet group.

For anyone upgrading to Internet Explorer v4, the auto-proxy server address to be inserted is bww.melbpc.org.au/local/proxy.pac

Until next month,

Regards,



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In our case we also lost the use of our PABX and our phones were silent to the calls from members trying to make contact. In a light-hearted way, the office staff and volunteers thought this was just as well!

Like all things that happen for the first time, and despite having thought that our contingency planning would have sufficed, we learnt a couple of things which are being changed to better cope should we experience a failure again in the future.

Members will be interested to know that the full Internet system was up and running within 15 minutes of the restoration of the power despite everything having been completely shut down. This was carried out by our office administrator, **Tricia Swan**, following step-by-step instructions given over the phone. She's not just a pretty face, you know!

What constitutes Dial Help?

Melb PC is proud of the Dial Help service it offers its members, but how far can you go? The list of volunteers whose names appear on the back of the *PC Update* mailer provide phone

assistance to members free of charge. However it is not a replacement for a proper training course on a subject, but is there to provide help to solve a problem for which you cannot find the answer in the manuals.

Using computers with modems for communication (e.g. to the Internet or the BBS), the problem may be caused by a number of reasons ranging from your modem installation, the correct configuration for connection at your end, line quality, other hardware or software, etc. Because of the range of factors involved, solving these problems requires extreme patience by the persons at both ends of the phone line. Remember, the volunteers providing assistance cannot see your monitor, and have to rely on what you tell them.

In the case of the Internet we will give as much help as we can to get the subscriber connected. After that, you are more or less on your own. The modern browsers do have extensive Help files that should suffice for the user who is prepared to learn by themselves. Frequently we will get a new user who requires considerable help to get connected, and then after

connecting to the Internet for the first time will say: "Hey, that's great, now what do I do next?"

The short answer is to do one of the excellent Internet courses conducted by Melb PC. These are planned for all levels of users, and spending a day at one of these courses will save you many weeks or months of possible frustration.

Again, in the case of Internet, there is a wonderful opportunity to ask questions and obtain advice in the local news-group *melbpc.general*. As well as Internet questions, often you will find the answer to software or hardware problems given there.

Ian Felsenthal co-ordinates home visit assistance for members, but this must be limited to those members who may be restricted in their activities or mobility, and not just to suit the convenience of a member.

All volunteers are not necessarily "experts", but do have experience in the category listed. Again, while speaking on the phone they cannot see your monitor or know what else is on your machine, and it is essential that you do

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Setting up separate icons for each Melb PC Internet Service access number

Setting up separate icons for each of the Melb PC Internet service access numbers can be done quite simply for Windows 95/98.

The procedure in detail is:

1. Click open "My Computer" icon
2. Click open "Dial-Up Networking" icon
3. Click open "Make New Connection" icon
4. In the top highlighted window, name the new connection
"Melb PC 56K Internet"
Select another modem if another is to be used.
5. Click Next, and enter the phone number "99349400" (you can ignore the Area and Country codes)
6. Click Next, and on the next screen click Finish

This is the end of the first stage.

7. Return to the "Dial-Up Networking" window. You will see the new icon for "Melb PC 56K Internet"
8. Highlight this new "Melb PC 56K Internet" icon with a single

mouse-click

9. Use the right mouse-button, highlight and click Properties
10. In the General tab, remove the tick against Country Code
11. In the Server Type tab, remove all ticks except TCP/IP (at the bottom)
12. On the same page, click the TCP/IP Settings button
13. On this page:
 - a. click "Server assigned IP address" (at the top)
 - b. click "Specify name server address" (the fourth spot)
 - (i) "Primary DNS"—enter 203.12.152.1
 - (ii) "Secondary DNS"—enter 203.12.152.2
 - c. Leave ticks in the bottom two squares, and click OK.
14. Return to the previous page. Click OK

The new dialler is now complete and ready to use, however there is an additional step to move it to your desktop for ease of use.

15. Highlight the new "Melb PC 56K Internet" icon with a single mouse-click
16. Use the mouse right-button, and highlight Create Shortcut
17. In response to the Shortcut message, click Yes, and the new shortcut icon will appear on your desktop
18. On the desktop, highlight the new icon with a single mouse-click, use the mouse right-button, and highlight Rename. For simplicity delete the words "Shortcut to".

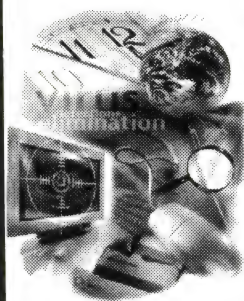
This completes the installation of a new dialling icon, and you can log in using this new Icon.

Note: The instructions given here are for the Melb PC 56K line, however the same method can be used to create a new dialler icon for other services by changing the phone number only, and using a suitable title to match, for example:

- "Melb PC Standard Internet" with 9686 4506
- "Melb PC 56K V.90 Internet" with 8626 5000
- "Melb PC Intranet Service" with 6690 5644

□

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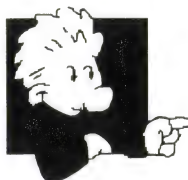
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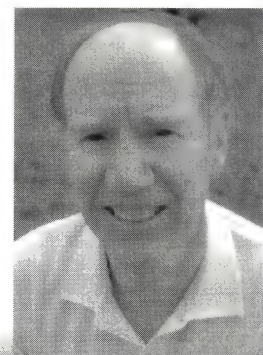


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Comparing disk cataloguing programs

The trend for computer magazines now seems to be to include one or more CD-ROMs with each issue. Personally I get four to five magazines each month, all of them with at least one cover CD-ROM. I have so far collected 92 magazine CD-ROMs and have purchased several others, mostly shareware. With this many CD-ROMs, I am amazed that none of the magazines has included any programs to catalogue such collections. Also, as I back up my hard disk at times (not often enough, but I do duplicate them too often), I needed to know what I had and where files were duplicated. Last, but not least, I also wanted to see which files were on which floppies.

With this in mind, I downloaded a handful of cataloguing programs, passed some of them on to some friends, compared them all, and produced this article. This way, none of you should need to waste as much time as we did looking at each of them before deciding which one to use.

The main test CD-ROM used was *Australian Personal Computer Magazine* April 1998, disk 1 (APCM). It had quite a few files, but not too many compressed files. In order to more accurately reflect speed tests on compressed files, we used an old shareware CD-ROM called *CICA Shareware for Windows*, April 1994. This sure was a tough test. It had 3,754 compressed files, which expanded to 38,723 files! This second test was only performed on those programs that catalogued compressed archive files.

I would like to thank both Frank Klaus and Ron Fischer. Ron looked at three programs for me, and Frank looked at five or more. Frank also spent quite some time looking at some of the others with me. My special thanks go to Frank, whose help and input was greatly appreciated. There was one

other person who offered to help. So we gave him three programs to look at, but we are still waiting. Where are you, Nick?

Evaluation criteria

To select the right cataloguing program we had to decide which criteria to use to compare programs. We decided that the programs had to meet the following essential and desirable criteria.

Essential

The program had to

- Handle hard disk drives as well as removable media, such as CD-ROMs, Floppy disks, ZIP disks and so on
- Be able to catalogue all files contained within archives, such as ZIP files and self-extracting EXE files
- Be reasonably fast
- Have a search facility, including wildcards for files and folders
- Have the ability to search for text in descriptions
- Provide useful help
- We envisaged that in use, we would not take advantage of catalogue archive file contents options when cataloguing shareware CD-ROMs, and that we would use it when cataloguing the contents of hard drives and removable media.

Desirable criteria

The program should

- Have an option for manually entering file descriptions
- Display or print duplicate files
- Print reports, preferably with some customisation
- Print reports to either the printer, the screen or a file
- Copy files from the source to other media easily, for example, from a CD-ROM or floppy to the hard disk drive.

the winner was...
the only program
that met all
essential and
desirable criteria

Files downloaded

The files I downloaded and extracted for comparison included, in alphabetical order:

- ADC1163.ZIP
- CATAL151.ZIP
- DB32_509.ZIP
- DCATZ10.ZIP
- DISKBOX1.ZIP
- DKCT12DU.ZIP
- EZCATU00.ZIP
- FLDCAT32.ZIP
- MCAT-V1.ZIP
- MNDSK13.ZIP
- SC97F.ZIP
- SCVNGR10.EXE
- SETUPEX.EXE
- SFC100.ZIP
- WHERE101.ZIP
- ZCP2.ZIP

There were three others, but these were earlier versions of the same programs included here.

Advanced Disk Catalog v1.16

ADC116.ZIP was 1,495,105 bytes. Installed size was 1,738,350 bytes. The database size was 232,482 bytes. Registration US\$20, around A\$30.

The APCM CD-ROM read in 28 seconds, without looking inside archives, or 2 minutes 54 seconds including looking inside all archives.

Items displayed for each file or folder included: Name, Modified date, Size, Comments and Category. Total space was 643 MB, 362 folders and 1,358 files. It handled compressed GZ, ZIP, ARJ and CAB files by using WinZIP or whichever compression utility has been associated with these file types (i.e. no internal unzipping).

Options that could be selected included: Auto-open last database; Save main window layout; Save search window layout; Save other windows layout; Display associated icons; Move to next file in properties; Remember open/save path; Search inside of compressed files (ZIP, ARJ, etc.); Sounds; Double-clicking

either opens file or shows properties; Show progress bar; Change disk serial number; Handle compressed files, including ZIP, ARJ, etc.; Extract folder description from FILE_ID.DIZ, dirinfo, etc.; Extract folder/file descriptions from FILES.BBS, DESCRIPTION, INDEX.TXT, etc.; Extract comments from archives; Extract file descriptions from archives (FILE_ID.DIZ); Convert descriptions from OEM to ANSI; Ignore hidden files and folders; Eject removable media after scan.

Menu items include: Create new catalog; Open catalog; Save catalog; Save catalog with a new name; Import database; Import categories; Show catalog information, including number of floppy disks, removable disks, CD-ROM disks, fixed disks, network disks, total space, used space, free space, number of folders, number of files; Disk name; Serial number; Comment; Date cataloged; Add volume; Update volume; Delete volume; Properties, including name, category and comment; Categories entry (add, edit or delete categories); Tool bar and status bar could be shown or removed; Disk in catalog could be compared with a disk.

Reports included: Quick or Custom reports; One or all disks; One or all categories. Reports, which were written to file, could include details on disks, folders, files, location, comments or only items with comments. Duplicates could be shown, but only one filename at a time, which was not as good as some of the other programs.

Search options included: Wildcard names; Categories; Search for string in either files/folders or comments; Date ranges; Size ranges; Exact matches and case matches. One aspect that annoyed me, was whatever wildcard I would enter, the program would insert an asterisk in front of it. For example, say I was searching for all files beginning with "fi", I would enter "fi*.*", after which the program would change this to "*fi*.*", thus locating many files I did not want.

Help screens were very good.

Assessment

This program was not recommended, as it could not store contents of archives, otherwise it would have been one of the recommended programs.

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Catalog v1.51

CATAL151.ZIP was 3,692,380 bytes. Installed size was 718,345 bytes. The database size was 477,184 bytes. Registration US\$20, around A\$30.

The APCM CD-ROM read in extremely fast at 17 seconds, without looking inside self-extracting archives.

File details included folders, files, attributes, sizes, dates and times, and comments.

Menu items included: New File; Open File; Update volume; Rename volume; Delete volume; Change category; Export; Toggle toolbar and status bar on or off; Large icons; Small icons; List view; Report view; Properties show volume ID, Volume label; Number of files (1,720); Drive catalogued on; Description, System, Update date, Size used (658.43 MB), Free space; File comments could be edited.

Options which could be configured included: Autoload last used catalogue; Allow update checking using either the serial number or volume name; Language can be selected as English, French or German; Process priority can be set to Idle, Normal or High (needs 24 MB of RAM); Search on filename (using wildcards) or comment; selected volume or all volumes.

Help was quite good, but there were lots of grammatical errors.

Assessment

This program was very fast, but it did not catalogue compressed file contents, had no reporting, lots of grammatical errors, and displayed a nag screen each time you started cataloguing a disk. The database file was quite large. The search did not include files inside archives. Not as good as some of the others.

DiskBase 5.09a

DB32_509.ZIP was 602,376 bytes. Installed size was 1,177,967 bytes. The database size was 396,450 bytes. Registration US\$29, around A\$45.

The APCM CD-ROM was read extremely quickly, 20 seconds, without looking inside self-extracting archives, or 48 seconds including looking inside all archives. For the next test, It took only 5 minutes and 11 seconds to process the CD-ROM with all the archives. Performing a search of a maximum of 16,000 entries (my larger entry of 50,000 got changed by the program to the obvious

maximum of 16,000) took 24 seconds to display them, sorted by no less than 3 fields.

Menu items included: New database; Open database; Close database; Compress database; Export; Import; Print; Copy; Edit description; Scan disk; Rescan current disk; Scan folder as disk; Scan drive A; Scan drive B; Delete disk; Undelete disk; Rename disk; Select disks or files; Unselect disks or files; Select all; List free space sorted by space or disk name or size of disk;

Disk information included: Disk id; Volume label; Drive; Number of folders (362); Number of Files (1,359); Number of archives (58 or 114 including self-extracting); Sum of physical file sizes (639.7 MB); Disk size (643.0 MB); Disk free space; Total files in archives (1,525 or 4,158 including self-extracting); Total folders in archives (36 or 87 including self-extracting); Sum of file sizes in archives (107.7 MB or 339.6 including self-extracting); Total data size (661.8 MB or 613.5 MB including self-extracting) and last update date and time. Database information includes: Database name; Size (387.2 KB); Number of records; number of deleted records; whether compression is recommended or not. Compression reduced the size from 387.2 KB to 167.9 KB.

Searching allowed the following choices: Search the whole database, selected disks or current disk; Search for text in names, descriptions or names and descriptions; Make search case sensitive; Sort found records using up to three level sorts by name and extension, extension and name, date and time, size, or disk and folder; Search can automatically be stopped after a nominated number of records has been found; Files can be excluded and can be in a range of dates and sizes.

Program settings options included: Show tree; Always show expanded; Sort files by name, extension, date and time, or size; Display file size in bytes or KB and MB; Display file names only, or with size, date and time and descriptions; Show icons by folders; Time with seconds; Use Windows date format; treat 1 KB as 1024 bytes or 1,000 bytes; Select fonts for various items; Select font for printing; Edit page header to be printed; select top, bottom, left and right margins; Nominate which database to open at startup; Place each search in a new window; Save settings at program end;

Make backup when compressing a database; Use Windows language support for sorting; Read volume names for Scan Disk dialog box; Save current window and panel sizes.

Database settings included: Read descriptions; Scan for nominated file types; Read maximum of X bytes from description; Conversion DLL; Warn before overwriting disks in the database; Display deleted disks; Simulate disk descriptions; Scan archives with or without a prompt or don't scan; Scan self-extracting ZIP archives; Scan self-ZIP, ARJ and RAR archives; Always or never rescan archives;

Help was very extensive.

This was a very fast and powerful program, with lots of options, but unfortunately it lacked any reporting.

DiskCatZ v1.0.32

DKCTZ10.ZIP was 4,249,516 bytes. Installed size was 470,703 bytes. The database size was 296,960 bytes. Registration US\$25, around A\$40.

The APCM CD-ROM read in at 1 minute 30 seconds including looking inside all archives. It then took quite a few seconds to write the file, which unfortunately was not timed.

To catalogue a disk, you could supply the disk name or title, select which drive to catalogue; select which file types to include in your catalogue; save FILE_ID.DIZ as the description. Then select Catalog disk.

Menu items included: View catalog; Catalog disk; Remove disk. You could also choose to have the FILE_ID.DIZ file included as the description.

Have you, like me, ever wondered what the file type DIZ stands for? The help file explains that it stands for Description In ZIP.

The Help screen was just a text file, displayed with no links, nor help options.

Assessment

We judged this program to be very basic, with few options. One of the features we really liked was that you could select which file types to include. In fact, after our first run, it occurred to us that not all files were included, so we had to select *.* to read in all files. This was one feature we wished some of the better programs had. After all, if you want to catalogue all your

magazine and all other CD-ROMs, most of us would only want to nominate the executable programs, not all the DLLs and other support files. This way the database could be very small indeed. Then, when you wanted to catalogue your hard disk drive(s), you could simply nominate all files if desired.

The program was also very slow at reading in the sample CD-ROM and had a very annoying screen flicker during the reading phase. There was no progress bar to show approximately how much was still to be processed. When we attempted to read in a second CD-ROM, we were requested to register, as the shareware version database limit had been exceeded. This was absolutely pathetic, as one would have thought at least two or three CD-ROMs should have been able to be included.

Not as good as some of the others.

DiskBox1

DISKBOX1.ZIP was 181,637 bytes. We were unable to install it, as it was a corrupt archive file, so no testing was done.

DiskCats v1.2

DKCT12DU.ZIP was 94,097 bytes. Installed size was 196,162 bytes. Registration US\$20, around A\$30.

This program, which had a German FILE_ID.DIZ file, did not appear to need to be installed, it was run direct from the temporary folder into which it was extracted from the zip file. The help contents were all in German, making it rather difficult to ascertain what was required. In spite of being tempted to stop testing, we persevered and found the following:

Menu items included: Product information; Printer setup; Archive directory structure; Search files; Drive information.

Once we selected Archive directory structure, and after that annoying noise the A drive makes when software attempts to access it without a disk being inserted, we found many more menu items. These included: Inspect all drives; Inspect removable drives; Open archive; Close archive; Create archive; Delete archive; Overview of archive; Compress archive; Reorganise archive; Create depot; Delete depot; Overview

depot; Inspect archive; Search for files; View large icons, small icons, list or details.

We couldn't use the help screens, because they were in German, the menu items were in English, which although it seemed strange, meant we could use the program.

However, after we tried, several times, to catalogue just the sample CD-ROM, we noticed that it did not appear to handle contents of compressed drives, and thus stopped testing.

Assessment

This could be an acceptable program, however because it did not appear to handle archived file contents, and the help screens were in German, we have rated it not as good as some of the others.

EzCat v1.00

EZCATU00.ZIP was 38,812 bytes. Installed size was 146,482 bytes. The database size was 63,999 bytes. This program was freeware. In spite of this, registration was required, otherwise you could only catalogue one disk. The

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reason for this was that the author wanted to know how many people were using his software. This seemed quite reasonable.

The APCM CD-ROM read in at 27 seconds, without looking inside any archives.

No installation was required, we just extracted the archive contents into a folder and ran the program from there. As the splash screen stated, it was designed for SyQuest and ZIP disks, but will catalogue any drive with up to 5,000 entries.

The menu items included: Catalogue a disk; Delete a disk; Rename a disk; Search; Option. Search options included entering either part of the filename or extension. The only option, which could be selected, was the default drive to catalogue.

The program allowed double clicking on an archive file, at which stage it would ask you to insert the disk, then use the associated archiving program to open the archive.

Assessment

The limit of 5,000 files was too restricting, as we wished to catalogue all magazine and other CD-ROMs, which could easily mean 100 or more CD-ROMs were to be catalogued. Also, no archive contents were stored, and the searching would not allow searching in comments. Not considered as good as some of the others. However, if your needs were not the same as ours, this program might be quite acceptable and it is free.

FldCat32

FLDCAT32.ZIP was 1,770,229 bytes.
Installed size was 334,694 bytes.
Registration US\$25, around A\$40.

Assessment

The main purpose of this program appeared to be to print folder listings, although the catalogue could be saved to a text file. It was therefore not considered suitable for our purposes.

MediaCat v1.0

MCAT-V1.ZIP was 307,592 bytes.
Installed size was 606,502 bytes.
Registration GBP15, around A\$30.

The APCM CD-ROM read in 27 seconds, without looking inside archives.

Assessment

Although it appeared that it this program should work, it was extremely difficult to figure out how to make it do so. There were no help screens, just a reference to the DOC file. Installation only requested a drive name, not a folder. After reading in a disk, looking at the index showed how many of up to five file types were in the index. No filenames could be seen, nor could the index be removed from the screen, as the exit button was greyed out. It appeared to be a collection of different programs. Compared with other programs tested, it was not very user friendly. After extracting all files from the zip archive, they were all marked as Read only, which was a nuisance when trying to delete them. Not as good as some of the others.

Manage Your Disks 97 v1.3

MNDSK13.ZIP was 639,622 bytes.
Installed size was 1,291,001 bytes. The database size was 493,056 bytes.
Registration US\$38, around A\$60 (which includes postage to Australia).

The APCM CD-ROM read in at 24 seconds, without looking inside archives. Saving to disk and adding index files made this a total of 42 seconds.

Menu items included: Printer setup; Cut; Copy; Paste; Log disks; Browse disks; Browse files; Search; Print report on disks in catalogue sorted by ID, volume label, category or free space; Files by disk report; Duplicate file report; Disk id labels; Disk labels.

When logging a disk, the label could be changed, categories could be added or modified, files could be suppressed from being added to a catalogue, and a disk comment could be entered. The number of files was shown, along with the disk's serial number and graphical representation of used and free space.

Browsing disks allowed the disks to be sorted by the ID (the first disk being 1, and so on), label, category, free space or user supplied number. Browsing files showed the file name, disk id number, date, time, size, attributes, type, comment, long file name and full path. Files could be searched for using wildcards. The only minor gripe I had, was that the window was reasonably small and could not be enlarged. It only occupied about a quarter of the screen, and could not be enlarged to a

larger screen view, if I so desired. A nice feature was that even though I had to scroll right to see more details, such as comment, long file name and full path, the short file name was always visible in the left column.

Searching could be performed by either disk or file. When searching by disk, I could select a field, such as ID number, category, comment, files, free space and so on. I could also select the type of operation, such as equals, doesn't equal, is more than, begins with, ends with, contains, and so on, followed by the value and whether or not the search should be case sensitive.

In the case of searching by file, the field selected was again one of many, such as DOS name, comment, date last changed, full path, type, and several others. The operation was again extensive as for disk searches. This searching was the most flexible of all programs reviewed here.

Several reports were provided, and were written to disk as well as being displayed on the screen. Some handy features were available during the on-screen viewing, such as fit to screen horizontally or vertically, zoom to a range of percentages, ranging from 25 to 250%, and a simple click to alternate between the selected zoom and 100%.

The Disks in Catalog report could be sorted by ID, volume label, category or the amount of free space. It included the ID number, label, category, total bytes, free bytes, free percentage and serial number. The files for a disk report showed the heading of the disk ID number, label, serial number, total space and free space. As well as this heading, it also showed the file number, file name, date (in US format, yuk!), time, size and attributes. The duplicate files report could be limited to one or all categories. It showed the disk ID number, file name, date, time, attributes, bytes and path. A clear separator was placed between each set of duplicate files. The only problem was that files were considered duplicates by name only, regardless of the date, time and size. Disk ID labels were very handy for floppy disks. They printed the disk number twice, first upside down, then the right way up, with the number for the edge of the floppy in between, very handy for numbering floppy disks, but it only went from 1 to 99 (I used to have around 400 floppies). The labels were also very handy. They included the

disk ID number, volume label, serial number, number of files, number of bytes, free space, and media type. Various label types and sizes can be defined and previewed on-screen.

Assessment

This program was quite interesting. The database could be sorted by any field on screen, such as file name, date, time, size or type. It had excellent reporting facilities. Definitely one of the better programs reviewed here. Unfortunately though, in spite of having many features, it did not store archived file contents, and was thus not recommended

SmartCat 97

SC97F.ZIP was 2,965,771 bytes. Installed size was 2,785,070 bytes, with the main program occupying around 1.8 MB. The database size was 348,160 bytes. Registration GBP29.38, around A\$60.

The APCM CD-ROM read in 1 minute 23 seconds, without looking inside archives, or 6 minutes 19 seconds when looking inside all archives and self-extracting archives. It took 105 minutes

and 20 seconds to process the CD-ROM packed with archives. Yes, one hour, forty-five minutes and twenty seconds! Next, I searched for all files. It stopped after reaching 8,000 files in 72 seconds. It claimed it could not handle more than 8,000 files. Oh well!

File details included filename, size, type, modified date and comments.

Menu items included: New database; Open database; Close database; Reopen; Catalog disk; New folder; Print; Import; Export; Rename; Delete; Update; Properties; Toolbar and Statusbar could be toggled on or off; Large icons; Small icons; List view; Detail view; Arrange icons; Options, only option was to enable full filename display; Edit comments; Find catalog entry; Explore current catalog or folder; Archive a folder; Compress catalog; Verify database; Repair database.

When cataloguing, contents of ZIP files could be analysed, as could self-extracting EXE files. Comments could be extracted; Comments could be re-used from matching cataloged file; Catalog media could be pre-validated for full progress status; Installed file

analysers could be used.

Search options included: Name; Type (various, including duplicates); Include or exclude subfolders; Date range; Comments, with optional whole word and case matching; Disk label ID and Catalog source.

Print options included the following reports: Avery diskette labels; Catalogue on A4 or letter paper; Detail print on A4 or letter paper. Reports could be designed, although this was not tested. Printed options appeared limited.

Help screens were excellent.

Assessment

An excellent program, except it was considerably slower than all others to read in disks. Also, the 8,000 file limitation was somewhat restrictive.

Scavenger

SCVNGR10.EXE was 3,260,416 bytes. This archive was corrupt. The program was not tested.



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FWS Easy File v1.0

SETUPEX.EXE was 2,458,405 bytes. Being a self-extracting file, it was not possible to look at any information first. After extracting, it was discovered that this was a document archiving program, not suitable for cataloguing CDs.

Super File Cat

SFC100.ZIP was 906,378 bytes. Installed size was 1,306,263 bytes. Registration US\$25, around A\$40.

Assessment

You could not control the installation folder for this program, and it appeared to only work with a single file type at a time, rather than an entire disk. It did not appear to do what we were looking for in a cataloguing program, and as it seemed prone to violation errors, we rated it poorer than some of the others.

WhereIsIt v1.01

WHERE101.ZIP was 1,655,169 bytes. Installed size was 2,956,756 bytes, with the main program file being 1,947,136 bytes. The database size was 61,048 bytes without files inside archives, or 179,019 bytes including files inside archives. Registration US\$37 by credit card, around A\$55. Alternatively you could send US\$30, about A\$45 cash to the author in Slovenia. I contacted the author, as I wished to register WhereIsIt. After checking with his bank, he advised that it would accept Australian cheques for the equivalent of US\$30.

The APCM CD-ROM read in 20 seconds, without looking inside any archives, or 41 seconds looking inside all archives,

including self-extracting EXE files. It took 13 minutes and 47 seconds to process the CD-ROM with all the archives. Performing a search for all files took 9 seconds, but they were sorted by folder, then by filename. To sort them by filename, simply by clicking on the filename header, took another 33 seconds. Wow, very impressive for some 38,000 files!

Properties displayed: Item type; Number of disks in catalog; Total storage space (643 MB); Total files (1,355); Total used space (637 MB); Total folders (362); Number of CD-ROMs, hard disks, floppy disks, removable disks, virtual disks and other disks in catalog; and the disk comments.

Items displayed included Filename, Extension, Size, Date, Time, Attributes, Category and Description.

Menu items included: New catalog; Open catalog; Save; Save as...; Close; Close all; Report generator; Export descriptions to media; Import from Floppy Master; Search for items; Scan for duplicates; View user list; Back one level; View file; Launch file; Copy to; Extract to; Add to user list; Set category and flags; Edit description; Properties; Sort items by Filename, Extension, Size, Date, Time, Attributes, Descriptions, Categories, as well as reverse sort order; View large icons; View small icons; View list; View details; Columns set up (select any or all from Filename, Extension, Size, Date, Time, Attributes, Category, Description; Display or hide toolbar and Statusbar; Add or update disk image; Compare disk to media; Compare files to catalog; Catalog manager; Categories set up; Rename disk; Display catalog info.

Program settings included: Show ".." folders; Display status bar; Sort archive files as folder; Show tips at program startup; Display formatted sizes for files and folders; Disable smooth expanding/collapsing in the catalog tree; Display keyboard Shortcuts in button tooltips; Assign double-clicking to mean: Open file in explorer, Nothing, Display file's properties, Launch file; View file, or Open description assistant; Show descriptions as tips; Change delay time before showing tips; Change autohide tips time; Assign a default path to catalog files; Create BAK files; Auto save catalog(s) every x minutes; Use internal built-in viewer or view files with a nominated program; Use a nominated program as shell instead of Windows Explorer; Make toolbar visible; Make toolbar floating; Change button size; Use old style buttons; Dock toolbar to top, bottom, left or right; Customize toolbar; Add separators; Change fonts for various components; Use either a custom or system default font; Import nominated file descriptions, such as FILE_ID.DIZ, DESCRIPTION, etc. (can change priority order); Truncate descriptions if longer than x lines; Keep current descriptions when updating; Keep old disk name when updating; Ignore hidden folders; Ignore hidden files; Ignore recycle bin folder; Allow program to change disk serial number; Ask first; Eject media after cataloguing; Browse inside compressed files, including ZIP, ARJ, RAR, CAB, LHA, ARC, LZH, PAK, HA, ZOO, TAR, GZIP, Z, EXE (self-extracting); Browse only for description without importing compressed files info; Allow quick scan through archive file when updating; Nominate a temporary folder to extract files to; Restore folder structure when extracting; Remove

These are the web or e-mail addresses for the various cataloguing programs tested.

Adc116.zip	http://www.elcomsoft.com
Catal151.zip	http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/Benjab
Db32_509.zip	http://www.learsy.top.cz
Dcatz10.zip	http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/John_Reder
Diskbox1.zip	http://members.tripod.com/~sharewareforyou/windows95.htm
DkCt12Du.zip	http://home.t-online.de/home/cranesoft
EzCatU00.zip	http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Peaks/3218/
MCat-v1.zip	E-mail: aaron@cardiffcybercafe.co.uk
MnDsk13.zip	http://www.turbosystems.com
Sc97f.zip	http://www.smartcode.com
SFC100.zip	E-Mail: greyparrot@worldnet.att.net
Where101.zip	http://members.tripod.com/~WhereIsIt

temporary extracted files either on program exit, leave in temporary folder or always ask before deleting; Add files to search for descriptions; Enable auto-loading of catalog and nominate the catalog(s) to load.

When searching, the following options could be selected: Search by name or attributes; Search by descriptions; Search by categories; Search by size; Search by date; Search for files, folders, or disks; Don't search for items inside archives; Clear previous search results; Limit search to specific disks; Show advanced search settings; Search files by Part of filename, wildcard, exact name, file extension; file type. Advanced search options included: Normal search or duplicates search; search criteria type, such as all conditions must be fulfilled; Stop searching when a nominated amount of items have been found, the default being 1,000 items. Search results show filename or folder name or disk name; Extension; Size; Date; Time; Volume name; Media type; Path; Category and Description.

When scanning for duplicates, the following options could be selected: Search duplicates by name; Search for files, folders, or disks; Don't search for items inside archives; Clear previous search results; Limit search to specific disks; Show advanced search settings; Nominate when files or folders are considered to be the same, including by name, size, date and time, attributes; Don't search for duplicates inside compressed files.

The Report Generator looked extensive, options included the ability to select: Report title; Generate report from one of the lists; Custom report from main window; Print report; Save report as ASCII file; Change printers; Create report from contents in main window, search results list, user list, compare to media results or check for files in catalogue results. You could also select the columns to include, by selecting any of: Filename; Extension; Size; Date; Time; Attributes; Descriptions or Category. Print preview was also selectable.

Help was extensive.

Assessment

We were impressed with this program from the first moment we looked at it. It was clearly the best program, with far more selectable options than any of the others reviewed here. I liked it so much, I decided to register it.

ZIPCat Pro v2.0

ZIP2.ZIP was 4,026,135 bytes. Installed size was 1,117,584 bytes. The default database was 126,976 bytes. The database size was 309,248 bytes. Registration US\$25, about A\$40.

The APCM CD-ROM read in at 22 seconds, without looking inside archives, or 43 seconds including looking inside all archives, including self-extracting EXE files.

When I tried to ascertain some information about this program, by looking inside the archive, I noticed that it had just one file inside the archive, called ZCP2.EXE. This was not a lot of use. I would have liked to have seen either a FILE.ID.DIZ file or some sort of readme file. It seems a bit strange to firstly create a self-extracting archive, then put that inside of a zip file. Even after extracting files out of the self-extracting file, the only file that even gave a clue regarding what was what, was the SETUP.LST file. At least I now knew that the program's name was ZIPCat Pro v2.0.

This program claimed to have the look and feel of the Office 97 suite, which was interesting. The unregistered version had a limit of three volumes.

When cataloguing a volume, you had two options: Clear existing file/folder description and Eject media when done, both of which were turned on by default.

Menu options included: New database; Open database; Export; New category; Catalog a volume; Search; Compact a database; Options.

Options included: Startup with search dialog; SmartCaps; Always clear descriptions; Eject media after cataloging; Nominate a default drive to catalog; Default to search folders; Default to search files. Some of these options were a little vague, but there was no question mark or other help available from within the options screen.

Search options included: Filename; Range of dates; Description contents; File size; Search folder names; Search file names.

Assessment

This program was considered unsuitable as it could not store contents of archives, otherwise it would have been one of the recommended programs.

Summary

Picking the winner was simple. WhereIsIt v1.01 was the only program that met all essential and desirable criteria. Although it was one of the most expensive, it was second fastest at cataloguing compressed files and had many more options than the other programs. It was the only one that could search and display all 38,000 or so archived files on the second CD-ROM.

Second place went to DiskBase. It had fewer options than WhereIsIt, but a faster cataloguing speed. On the second CD-ROM with all the archives, it was between two and four times faster than WhereIsIt. If speed is your most important criteria, and you feel you can live without some of WhereIsIt's many excellent options, you might even consider DiskBase the winner.

Third place went to SmartCat 97, which had more printing options and report definitions than DiskBase. However, on the second test it was over seven times slower than WhereIsIt and around 20 times slower than DiskBase.

Fourth was EzCat v1.0. Although it did not meet all essential criteria, it is free and may suit some users. □

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You want what?

Have you ever been told you need to submit a file as a plain text file, plain ASCII text or an ASCII file? If you've been around computers for a while, chances are you know about this file format. If you are a relative newcomer, you may wonder what you've been asked to do, and if you will be able to do it. (If you're already a regular contributor to *PC Update*, and you've never been asked to resubmit your contribution as a plain text file, you can skip this article.)

What is ASCII?

ASCII is an acronym for American Standard Code for Information Interchange, it's pronounced ass-kee. Like any code, it's essentially a substitution table.

ASCII code differs from, say, the code that describes a word processing document, in that it does not describe any special formatting. No fancy fonts.

No bold. No curly quotes. So, yes, "plain ASCII" is redundant.

Although it is sometimes useful to know the code (the substitution table) and be able to produce the characters, line feeds, etc from their Hex values, all most users need to know is that if they confine their documents to standard numbers, letters and punctuation, without any flourishes whatsoever, that will be good enough.

You should note that a formatted document, which is "saved as" a plain text or ASCII text (or sometimes called a DOS text file) won't necessarily produce a clean ASCII text file. You may find that remnants of the formatting survive the "save as" function, or worse, the recipient of the file will discover these remnants. So it's better to create the file without formatting, than to format it, and save it as a plain text file.

Why, with all the whizz-bangery possible with modern word processing and

desktop publishing programs would any one want plain text files? It's a common denominator. Most programs can read ASCII text, so using ASCII avoids problems with file incompatibility. (That's why we use it for *PC Update*.)

Some protocols expect ASCII text, for example standard e-mail programs. If you've ever received an e-mail message filled with strange characters where apostrophes, end of lines, quotation marks and such belong, those strange characters are the remnants of a formatted document being sent using a protocol that only handles ASCII characters. If the program that created the document and the one reading it use different codes to describe the formatting, the results won't be as expected. Binary (image or other proprietary formats) files can be turned into ASCII text for e-mail transmission, but a decoding program must be used to turn it back into an image or otherwise formatted file. □

For your Internet toolbox

I probably shouldn't admit this, but I went through university and double digit flats, share houses and other living arrangements with a tool kit that consisted of a shoe (to use to pound nails into walls) and a knife (for screwing screws into walls).

I've matured since then, but my tool box is still pretty bare. Now my accessory folder is another thing entirely.

When it comes to computing, I like having different tools for different tasks. It's not all vanity, lust or a matter of taste either.

Contrary to what you may have read, a browser isn't a universal tool, a browser is not the be all and end all of Internet tools. Not this browser. Not that one.

I'll concede that many users are

perfectly happy using a browser to read newsgroups, I like a dedicated news reader, and call it a matter of taste.

But if you are a file junkie, you will want to get a File Transfer Protocol (FTP) program.

Yes, I know. This browser can transfer files. That browser can transfer files as well. But an FTP program will transfer files more quickly and in some instances, do it when a browser fails. Some FTP sites, especially the busier ones, restrict the number of browser FTP processes at any one time. Some FTP sites that support anonymous FTP, do not integrate with this browser's or that browser's FTP protocol. Using a stand-alone FTP client can often sidestep these sorts of restrictions and incompatibilities.

There are plenty of FTP programs to

choose from, one of the best known is WS-FTP. It's available for Windows 3.x, 95/98 and Windows NT operating systems. If you remember the good old days of Zmodem and the BBS, and miss the ability to resume a suspended or cancelled download, you may want to try a program called Cute-FTP or one of the other similar programs that offer the download resumption feature. Be aware however that not all such programs can resume a download from all FTP sites.

The Melb PC BBS has several FTP clients for members to choose from, I'd also expect to find that at least one FTP client is available via the Intranet, because it's such a useful utility, someone is sure to have requested it recently. If you want to widen your choice, or read more about FTP clients, visit Tucows (<http://www.tucows.com>). □



Members' free ads

FREE

"To good home" Maestro 2400ZXR external 2400 bps modem, with manual. In working order, last time I looked — a while ago!

Peter 9876 2871,
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Peter 9876 2871,
10 am – 10 pm.

FOR SALE

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Ian 9569 6679

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Peter 9876 2871,
10 am – 10 pm.

Richard Kelleher and Mel B. PC team up with a tip from the threads

Richard's problem?

> I hope some-one can help. I often have documents in 12 pt with 14 pt headings.

> Is there any way I can reduce all the font sizes by 2, ie 10 pt text and 12 pt headings? Simply highlighting the text and choosing 10 pt on the tool bar reduces everything.

To the rescue, came Mel with the following quick, easy and effective shortcut:

Hiya, Richard!

Here is a little shortcut that will do the trick (...and for anyone else who wants to change font size quickly!)

Highlight the text and press Ctrl+Shift+ > to increase all font sizes or Ctrl+Shift+ < to reduce font sizes.

Catch ya,

Mel

Advertisements from members, for Swap, Wanted, For Sale, Free, etc, are run free of charge.

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600/660/670/690/692/694	51649A	3col 12 ea col	\$59	Col II/III/820/1500	S020049	3col 12 ea col	\$59
720/820/850/870/890/1150	51645A	Bk 6	\$59	Color 300	S020138	4col 12 ea col	\$69
820/850/870/1150	51641A	3col 9 ea col	\$59	Col 400/500/600/Photo/700/EX	S020093	Bk 12	\$49
720/890/1150	C1823A	3col 9 ea col	\$59	Col 200/500	S020097	3col 12 ea col	\$59
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CANON				Photo/700/EX	S020110	5col 12 ea col	\$69
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BJC210/210SP/240/255	BC05	3col 12 ea col	\$59	4076/1020/2030/2050	1380619	3col 6 ea col	\$59
BJC4000/4100/4200/4300/4550	BC20/BC121Bk	Bk 8/60	\$59	500/5700/7000/7200	12A1970	Bk 8	\$59
BJC4000/4100/4200/4300/4550	BC121C	3col 30 ea col	\$59	500/5700/7000/7200	12A1980	3col 12 ea col	\$59
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Helping them do what?

The list is almost endless — some of the things Melb PC is best known for are:

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Practical and emotional support. Whether you're trying to install a new operating system, hard drive, word processor or flight simulator, someone at Melb PC has been there and done that. You may find a whole group of people who meet regularly to discuss the very problem you are experiencing.
- **Meeting**
One of the ways Melb PC helps its members support each other is through meetings. Within its diverse membership you'll find novices, old hands and everyone in between. Whatever you're trying to do, there's someone to help you. As a member of Melb PC, you'll also have the opportunity to meet industry leaders and technical experts representing major software and hardware vendors. They'll answer your questions and demonstrate the latest developments in computing technology, often before the general public gets the news.
- **Teaching, learning and enjoying**
As an organisation, Melb PC with its range of skills and knowledge provides a range of formal and informal opportunities for teaching and learning new computing skills.

So whatever you use a computer for, Melb PC helps you enjoy it more!

How?

Melb PC's greatest strength is its membership. With more than 11,500 members, it is the world's second largest PC User Group. It was founded in 1984, and is still run by and for its members, people like you.

Although Melb PC employs some staff, most functions from writing and editing the group's magazine, to maintaining the group's online services, organising monthly meetings, etc, are performed by volunteers.

Who belongs to Melb PC?

Anyone who uses a computer at work, school or play. Parents, children, grandparents and singles. Beginners, old hands, youngsters, oldsters and inbetweeners. Teachers, students, business operators, secretaries, CEOs, doctors, lawyers, plumbers, electricians, builders, pilots, writers, editors, engineers, journalists, accountants and more!

You name it, Melb PC's members do it. Your membership is your key to a vast store of knowledge, an invaluable information resource and help in many fields.

Your benefits of membership come to you in many ways throughout the year:

- **PC Update**
Eleven times a year, Melb PC's magazine, *PC Update* brings you news about computer hardware, software and how your fellow members use these to achieve their goals. You'll read about members' experiences, learning from their successes and mistakes. Each issue also covers the group's regular activities and any special "members only" events or offers the group has arranged. Your yearly membership, which includes *PC Update* delivered to you, costs about as much as it would to buy a year's issues over the counter.
- **Computer First-Aid and Dial Help**
Free vendor support is scarcer every year. It's no wonder many members find these two services, alone, worth the cost of membership. These are "members only" services. Experienced volunteers share their time and knowledge to help fellow members work through problems. Just knowing there is someone to call gives some members the courage to try something new.
- **Internet Access**
The Internet is the foundation of the communication revolution and the key to success in the new millennium. Melb PC pioneered the provision of affordable Internet access and remains an acknowledged leader offering very competitively priced Internet access to members. The fast and reliable service provides connection speeds up to 56 kbps, with pre-configured software for ease of installation, helpful technical support, and is constantly evolving in pace with emerging technology.
- **Training**
Whether you're an absolute beginner planning to buy your first computer or a power user looking to update your skills, Melb PC has a training course for you. Most

courses are hands on, conducted in Melb PC's own, modern, Pentium-equipped training centre. These courses are "members only" so they are cost-competitive compared to similar courses elsewhere. Each month *PC Update* contains details of forthcoming courses.

• Meetings

Our main monthly meetings include presentations by leading computer hardware and software vendors to Melb PC members and their guests.

Speakers have included industry giants such as Bill Gates, Philippe Kahn and Gordon Eubanks, as well as the CEOs and senior managers from most major Australian and overseas vendors. Members can win software worth thousands of dollars at these meetings.

The monthly meeting provides an opportunity to ask questions and get to know your fellow members better. With an average of 400 members attending, the meetings are great for exploring your fellow members' problem-solving skills.

• SIGs

If big groups aren't for you, or if you have a special interest, Special Interest Groups (SIGs) may be your thing. A SIG can deal with any topic, from a particular application to hardware, programming, or how to get the best from your equipment. Check a current issue of *PC Update* for meeting dates, locations, contact information and information about future events.

• Bulletin Board

For members not quite ready for the Internet, Melb PC operates a free, multi-line bulletin board system (BBS). The BBS has a large collection of shareware and freeware programs for members to download. Members also use the BBS to send messages to other members.

• Reference and Software Libraries

Books and magazines are available for members to browse or borrow. An extensive range of shareware and freeware programs are reviewed in *PC Update* and are available on disk from the shareware library.

Whether you are an individual, family or company, one thing is clear. If you want to get the most from your computing experience, a Melb PC membership is a must. □

Melb PC Membership Application/Renewal

Personal details

Membership number (if renewing)

Title Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Ms ☐ Dr ☐ Oth. Ref: PCU 1198

First name Middle initial

Last name

Postal address

Postcode

Country

Business phone ()

Home phone ()

Job title

Employer

I do ☐ do not ☐ want to receive occasional promotional mail from commercial organisations.

I hereby apply for membership of Melbourne PC User Group Inc. A00003293V and agree to abide by its rules while I am a member.

Signature

Date

Membership details

Type	New	Renewal	Amount
Individual (extra family members at \$10 each)	\$60 <input type="text"/>	\$50 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Corporate (two representatives, extra representatives at \$60 each)	\$130 <input type="text"/>	\$120 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Student or	\$50 <input type="text"/>	\$40 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Pensioner (see notes)	\$50 <input type="text"/>	\$40 <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>

Notes:

- Students must attach a photocopy of student card or letter from educational institution confirming full-time student status.
- Pensioners must attach a photocopy of both sides of their Pension Concession Card.
- Please attach a list if more than one family or corporate member is being nominated with this application.
- Corporate members may change representatives by giving notice in writing to the secretary.

Total \$

How did you learn about Melb PC?
Please complete the appropriate details.

☐ PC Update ☐ Swap Meet ☐ Friend (please give name and number following)

Member No: Name:

☐ Other (give details)

For membership application or renewal, or training orders, please use the remittance and/or credit card form on the next page.

Training order form

Course Title	Starting Date	Amount
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Total:		<input type="text"/>

Top choice shareware

These are some of the most popular volumes in the Melb PC Shareware/ Freeware library. Refer to the regular catalogue updates in *PC Update* for up-to-date listings of other disks—use the lower part of this order form for your choice from those listings.

Shareware/PD Title	Melb No.	Qty	Amount
Shareware Catalogue & New Member Disk	0000		
Graphics Workshop for DOS	8015		
Graphics Workshop for Windows 3.x	8064		
Graphics Workshop for Windows 95	8562		
Growit	8157		
List	1490		
McAfee VirusScan for DOS	8018		
McAfee VirusScan for Windows 3.x (3-disk set)	8897-8899		
McAfee VirusScan for Windows 95 (4-disk set)	8893-8896		
MS-DOS 6.22 Stepup from 6.0 (3-disk set)	8110-8112		
PKZip/PKUnzip	1235		
Real Audio Player for Windows 3.x	8364		
Real Audio Player for Windows 95	8592		
Telix for DOS	8062		
Telix for Windows v1.00 (2-disk set)	8129-8130		
Wolfenstein Fights Street Fighter II	8012		
Melb PC Internet kit (special price) Windows 3.x @\$10 per set (3-disk set)	8711-8713		
Melb PC Internet Setup Master (Win 95/98)	9192		
Postage/Packing is included. Costs: first disk (per order) \$5, second disk \$4, third and subsequent disks \$3 each		Total:	

I am
☐ under 15 years of age
☐ under 18 years of age
☐ over 18 years of age

Signature:

Buy your diskettes from Melb PC

Order details

Brand/Size	Cost (Box of 10)	Number of boxes	Value
Memorex 5.25-inch HD (1.2 MB)	\$12.50		
Memorex 3.5-inch HD (1.44 MB)	\$15.00		
Generic preformatted 3.5-inch HD (1.44 MB)	\$5.00		
Postage and packing	\$5 per order:		\$5.00
Enclose a cheque or use the credit card authority below		Total: \$	

Important: Please complete the following for both shareware and diskette orders.

Member details

Name _____

Membership number:					
--------------------	--	--	--	--	--

Delivery details

Delivery Address _____

State	Postcode				
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Payment Details/Credit Card Authority
Forward to Melb PC, PO Box 283, South Melbourne VIC 3205, Australia

I enclose a cheque made payable to Melbourne PC User Group Inc. (A0003293V) for		\$					Date								
Please debit my:	Bankcard		Visa		MasterCard		with \$				Card expiry date				
	Card number														
		Business hours phone number ()									
Card holder's name							Signature								

Internet access application form

Instructions

- Please **read** the entire form. It may be photocopied.
- Complete **every** field else it might be returned to you. Each field has a purpose, which includes updating our database.
- Enclose a cheque or authorise a charge against your credit card for the requisite amount. Send the form with payment to
Melbourne PC User Group
PO Box 283
South Melbourne VIC 3205

Description of service

- **General.** The Melbourne PC User Group Inc A0003293V (Melb PC) Internet Service network (the Network) is a private telecommunications network owned and operated by Melb PC for its members. It is administered by the Internet Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) as a subscriber-funded service.
- **Function of the Melb PC Network.** The primary function of the Network is to support the free transfer of information to and from Melb PC members, subject to the terms of our Acceptable Use Policy.
- **Standard Service.** SLIP/PPP accounts.
- **Features:**
 - Electronic Mail.
 - We also provide access to other services that are found on the Internet but they are not under our control.
- **Charges.** Annual fee \$140, subject to change from time to time.
- **Limits and Quotas.** Up to 120 minutes access per day (non-cumulative). A bank of modems is made available with a time limit of 30 minutes for the benefit of users who need to check their mail and get off quickly. The Mail quota is 4 MB. Excess mail may be deleted.
- **Access Software.** You will need to acquire and configure suitable software from our Shareware library or other resources.
- **Accounts.** Accounts are issued only to individuals, not company names. Melb PC may reject an application without stating a reason.
- **Support.** Volunteers offer their help in local newsgroups, via our free Bulletin Board Service, or by telephone.
- **Training.** Melb PC offers training courses.
- **Duration.** The subscription to the Network is for one year from the date of acceptance. It automatically terminates upon expiry of membership of Melb PC.
- **Acknowledgment.** Successful applicants will include individuals whose forms are correctly filled out and whose funds have been transferred to our bank account.
- **Net Etiquette.** Melb PC endorses adherence to ("net etiquette" or "netiquette") as deemed by the subcommittee from time to time.

Internet access agreement

Definitions

"**Melb PC**" means The Melbourne PC User Group Incorporated A0003283V or its assignee; "**the subscriber**" means the Melb PC member making this application;

"**family subscriber**" refers to an existing Melb PC Family Member, or a member of the family residing at the same address who applies for Melb PC Family Membership at this same time, paying the additional \$10 Melb PC membership in addition to the Internet subscription;

"**Internet access**" means access to the World Wide Web, Internet e-mail and any additional Internet facilities Melb PC may offer to its members from time to time, but unless Melb PC agrees otherwise does not include supply or maintenance of the subscriber's equipment, software or telephone line, or technical support; "**subscription period**" means the period in advance for which the subscriber has paid in full, being one of the periods of subscription offered by Melb PC from time to time;

1. The subscriber asks Melb PC to provide Internet access and Melb PC agrees to do so.
2. This agreement starts when an authorised officer of Melb PC has executed it and Melb PC has received cleared payment for the subscription period.
3. Subject to the early termination clauses of this agreement and to clause 4, this agreement continues until the end of the subscription period.
4. If Melb PC and the subscriber renew this agreement for a further subscription period, this agreement applies to the renewed subscription period unless the parties agree otherwise in writing.
5. The subscriber acknowledges that:
 - a. Continuity and speed of the Internet access depends on a wide range of factors, many of which are beyond the control of Melb PC;
 - b. Melb PC has no control over the accuracy or appropriateness of any information on the Internet;
 - c. Melb PC is not responsible for any material available on the Internet;
 - d. The subscriber's Internet access may be interrupted by equipment failure, the need for routine maintenance, peak demand and so on;
 - e. Melb PC cannot guarantee that the subscriber will be able to secure access at any given time, or that fluctuations in demand by other subscribers will not prevent the subscriber from using the full amount of the maximum daily time allowance on any given day.
6. Subject to matters of the kind referred to in the previous clause and to the subscriber's access limits, Melb PC will use its best endeavours to keep Internet access available continuously and to allow the subscriber to have access for the current daily time allowance from time to time.
7. The subscriber indemnifies Melb PC against any liability, claim, action, suit, demand, loss, cost or expense arising out of or in any way connected with this agreement or Internet access, including any negligence by Melb PC, its servants or agents.
8. The subscriber will pay fees according to Melb PC's standard pricing list from time to time, and a copy of the list certified by an officer of Melb PC is conclusive evidence of the prices applicable at any time.
9. Melb PC may make rules for the use by the subscriber of Internet access, including rules as to online time limits, transmission volume limits, excess usage fees, terms of payment and any other matter at all that Melb PC considers desirable, provided that there shall be no reduction in the access time of the subscriber during any period for which the subscriber has paid in advance unless the service provided by Melb PC has been or is to be enhanced so as to make up for any lost value. Melb PC may alter the rules on not less than fourteen days notice to the subscriber. A copy of the rules certified by an officer of Melb PC is conclusive evidence of the rules applicable at any time. The rules from time to time will apply as if they were set out in full as terms of this agreement.
10. The subscriber must not deliberately or recklessly do anything that damages Melb PC's equipment, software, setup or services.
11. The subscriber must not use Internet access to annoy, harass or harm other Internet users.
12. The subscriber must not use Internet access for any unlawful purpose or in any unlawful manner.
13. The subscriber will keep safe and confidential any access numbers, codes or passwords allotted to them by Melb PC and notify Melb PC without delay of any disclosure of those things.
14. Melb PC may terminate the subscriber's Internet access immediately if the subscriber breaches this agreement or the rules, or fails to promptly pay any money owed to Melb PC, or ceases to be a member of Melb PC.
15. Subject to the previous clause, either party may terminate this agreement by 14 days' notice to the other save that Melb PC must not terminate this agreement while the subscriber has credit for advance payment of fees without refunding a pro rata part of those fees or making alternative Internet access arrangements for the subscriber, and termination by the subscriber does not affect any debt owed to Melb PC at the time of termination.
16. Melb PC may delete without notice any material found on its storage disks that is unauthorised, unlawful, obscene, dangerous, excessive in volume, uncollected for an excessive period, or in an unauthorised place.

17. Melb PC may delete without notice any material found on its storage disks without giving any reason for doing so.
18. Melb PC may make and keep any record it requires for the purpose of this agreement or the rules or for the operation of its services.
19. The Description of Service, Internet Access Agreement, and the services as described on this application form constitute the entire agreement between the parties, and neither of them relies on any term, condition, warranty, collateral contract, representation or promise not set out in those parts of this application forms.
20. Any notice given about any matter concerning this agreement may be given by fax, e-mail or post at the last fax number, e-mail or postal address notified to the sender and is deemed to have been received at the time when it would have arrived in the ordinary course of the relevant type of transmission.
21. The subscriber must not transfer, sell or share Internet access rights, or allow the account to be used by any other person, other than those Melb PC Family Members who are listed on this application and have paid the relevant charges.
22. The user's last name must be displayed in all mail and news messages. The user's first name or initials may be displayed as desired.
23. Commercial traffic, in the form of private messages and advertisements in newsgroups designated for that purpose, is permitted within the bounds of net etiquette.
24. The *Organization*: field in private electronic mail or public newsgroup article headers must always be *Melbourne PC User Group, Australia*, the name of the service provider. Any other organisation or business name is permitted only in the four-line (maximum) "signature" text that is optionally inserted at the end of the message or article.
25. Connection of any networking system or device that permits multiple users to share one account simultaneously is not permitted.
26. The *From*: field used in mail and news messages must be the Melb PC assigned user name, e.g. *jjones@melbpc.org.au* not the address where a reply is sought, e.g. *jjones@pobox.com.au*. Such an arrangement should be managed by use of the *Reply-To* field.
27. Melb PC may assign its rights and obligations under this agreement to an Internet access provider that is of equal standard to Melb PC, and after notice of assignment is given to the subscriber, this agreement shall have operation as if it had been entered into between the assignee and the subscriber and Melb PC's rights (except for its right to recover any money owed to it immediately before the assignment) and obligations under this agreement shall be at an end.
28. The parties submit to the law of Victoria, Australia in relation to any the interpretation of this agreement, or any dispute arising out of it. ☐

Service required and payment

Primary Subscription	\$ 140.00
Additional Family Subscribers	
..... @ \$5.00 each	\$
Melb PC Internet Kit software	
Windows 3.x version @ \$10.00	\$
Melb PC Win 95/98 setup @ \$5.00	\$
Total	\$

Tick ☒

☐ Cheque for above total is enclosed.
or

☐ Debit my card with \$.....

☐ Bankcard / ☐ MasterCard / ☐ Visa

Expires:/.....

Number:

Name on Card:

Signature:

Applicant details

First Name:

Last Name:

Membership Number:

Postal Address:

Postcode:

Telephone
(day): (.....)

Telephone
(evening): (.....)

Job Title:

Employer:

Tick ☒

My age is: ☐ 18 or above. ☐ Below 18.

I hereby apply for the Internet service described on this and the previous page

Signature:

Additional Family Members who will share the one account/user name:

Name

Signature

Name

Signature

Name

Signature

Applicant(s) to complete (CAPITALS, please)

Parent/guardian to complete

(If any of the applicants is below the age of 18)
I am the parent/guardian of an applicant. I am aware of the nature of information available through the Internet and support this application.

Name:

Telephone
(day) (.....)

Signature:

User name

List below the user ("login") names you would like, in order of preference, up to eight lowercase characters and/or numerals. Write very clearly, to avoid our confusing certain letters. User names are expressed in lowercase letters and numbers and must represent your real name in some recognisable way, e.g. "John J. Jones" might request user names such as "john", "johnj", "jjones", etc. Any user name that is already allocated or deemed unsuitable in the opinion of the system administrators will not be allocated. Preferred full name (e.g. *John J Jones* or *Jones Family*), to be recorded on the system.

Previous name (if to be changed):

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Choice 1:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Choice 2:

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Choice 3:

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Choice 4:

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Choice 5:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Office use only

☒ Tick as applicable:

☐ Form and fee correct

☐ Parent of underage applicant contacted (date)/...../199...

☐ Membership database checked and updated

☐ Incomplete form returned to sender (date)/...../199...

☐ Acknowledgment returned to sender (date)/...../199...

Initials of office staff:

*Discounts from
members and
advertisers*

Discounts for members

If you are a member or advertiser offering a discount on goods or services to Melb PC members, on production of their membership cards, please contact the office to register your offer, which will then be listed in future issues of PC Update.

Computer service, parts, support, etc

Austral Data Processing Services

Forest Hill
Ph: 9894 0199
Fax: 9894 7688
20%—(not hardware) on consultancy, data backup/storage, maintenance.

Batterymaster

Murrumbidgee
Ph: 9563 8460
Fax: 9579 4844
15%—batteries for laptop computers.

Bayside PC Services

Mentone
Ph: 9585 1645
10%—selected services.

Calculator King

St Kilda Road
Ph: 9866 8753
Fax: 9820 9652
10%—all calculators (inc. scientific/financial and speciality). Personal Organisers: Sharp, Casio, HP, Psion.

Compatible Toner and Ink

North Carlton
Ph: 9388 9744
Fax: 9388 9755
15%—Re-manufactured laser printer cartridges and inkjets.

Greensborough Computers

Greensborough
Ph: 9434 6166
Fax: 9434 6033
20%—(labour only) on repairs and upgrades for individual Melb PC Members. 5% on some models of new PC Systems (please enquire).

Metropolis Corp. Pty Ltd

Ferntree Gully
Ph: 9752 4242
Fax: 9752 3777
10%—computer systems (incl. free 24-hour software/technical support.) \$35 per hour for maintenance/support

Modem SuperStore

Box Hill
Ph: 9899 4744
Fax: 9897 3939
5%—Melb PC Member's special discount.

Moon-Ess Computers

Essendon
Ph: 9326 2776
Fax: 9326 2797
10%—service and repairs, new & secondhand parts & systems.

Mountain Visions

Pty Ltd
Sunshine North
Ph/Fax: 9310 1063
10%—on labour only — customised software, hardware & software consulting, maintenance, on-site training.

Nucleus Computer Services Pty Ltd

Carnegie
Ph: 9569 1388
Fax: 9569 1540
10%—on all services on equipment.

PCLC Computers

Heathmont
Ph/Fax: 9870 3288
20%—labour on upgrades, 5% on some new systems.

Pollock Computer & Technical Services

Hampton
Ph: 9533 5002
Fax: 9598 3186
20%—Personal PC tuition & problem solution.

The Power of 2, Software and Marketing

Pakenham
Ph: 5940 2020 BH & AH
10%—registered copies of Brothers Keeper genealogy software. Local support, manuals & supply of updates. \$75 plus postage.

Stone Computer Installations

Ph: 9315 0095
Mob: 0412 099 538
25%—Hardware/software installation, internet set up and problem solutions.

Summit Computers

Lilydale
Ph: 9739 6269
Fax: 9735 0503
20%—on labour (service, networks, etc),
6%—hardware & software.

Books, magazines, software, etc

Advanced Computer Products

St. Albans
Ph: 9364 1886
Fax: 9367 3639
20%—all computer books & software.

Capricorn Programming Services

Frankston
Ph: 9775 5377
Fax: 9774 5434
10%—on Scanlab Vol.1 Antivirus & virus education kit.

Collins Booksellers

(Technical and Academic Centre)
Melbourne
Ph: 9654 3144
10%—computer books.

Computer Book Company

Mt Evelyn
Ph: 9737 0411
Fax: 9737 0433
20%—all computer books, mail order.

Cybec Pty Ltd

Glen Iris
Ph: 9825 5600
Fax: 9884 0844
E-mail: info@vet.com.au
10%—Vet Anti-Virus Software.

Dymocks, Shop 2

Melbourne
Ph: 9663 1344
Fax: 9663 1581
10%—computer books, not on magazines.

Dymocks

Brighton
Ph: 9592 1911
Fax: 9592 1611
10%—computer books.

Dymocks

Westfield Shopping Town,
Doncaster
Ph: 9848 7209
Fax: 9848 7307
10%—computer books.

Dymocks

Frankston
Ph: 9770 0300
Fax: 9770 0400
10%—computer books.

Dymocks

Fountain Gate
Ph: 9796 6459
Fax: 9796 6509
10%—computer books.

Dymocks

Pran Central, Prahran
Ph: 9510 2100
Fax: 9519 2520
10%—computer books.

Trevor Gibbs

Melton
Ph: 9743 8917
15%—books: "Windows Whys" and "Easy DOS It", \$16.95 ea, \$32 for both. Incl diskettes.

ITS Information Technology Systems

Greenvale
Ph/Fax: 9333 2197
20%—computer books,
Educational Software.

Mace Booksellers and Stationers

Mount Waverley
Ph: 9807 1899
10%—computer books.

McGills Authorised Newsagency

Melbourne
Ph: 9602 5566
10%—computer books.

Polyester Books

Fitzroy
Ph: 9419 5223
Fax: 9419 5451
10%—on all fiction, science, computer & non-fiction titles, magazines, comics & T-shirts.

RMIT Bookshop

Melbourne
Ph: 9663 5855
Fax: 9663 7528
10%—all books.

Technical Book and Magazine Company

Melbourne
Ph: 9663 3951
10%—computer books.

The Worsley Press

Hastings
Freecall: 1800 622 805
Ph/Fax: 5979 1112
E-mail: info@worsleypress.com
10%—& free postage.

Other services

Adept Accounting and Taxation

Mill Park
Ph: 9436 7604
10%—on all taxation return preparation & business accounting services.

Blinds of Best Value

Oakleigh South
Ph: 9562 7788
Fax: 9562 7757
15%—top quality vertical, holland, venetian, timber venetian blinds and shutters, and all types of awnings.

EasyRSVP

Werribee
Ph: 015 541 253
Fax: 9742 4566
http://easysrvp.com
10%—on all corporate and wedding RSVP forms.

Heal Your Life Astrology

Marysville
Ph: 5963 3626
Fax: 5963 3737
10%—on all birthchart consultations

Mediware Applications

Camberwell
Ph: 9889 9234
Fax: 9889 9236
5%—(purchase), 10% on training and installation of Dental, Medical (including MedClaims) & Allied Professional Patient Management & billing software.

Min Thong Lee

c/- AP Insurance Brokers
Queen St, Melbourne
Ph: 9602 1869
Fax: 9602 1876
5%—life insurance, loans, home & contents, motor, commercial.

Mike McKeon Music

Dingley Village
Ph: 9551 7363
5%—on our Octet or 10% on a 14 pce. Big Band and two vocalists. Discount off Musicians' Award rates. For dinner dances, weddings, balls & special events.

Newtech R&D

Kilsyth
Ph/fax: 9723 7535
10%—on electronics consumer product design & Japanese translation.

Sit Right Chairs Pty Ltd

Coburg
Ph: 9354 2612
Fax: 9354 2795
10%—off range of office and ergonomic chairs.

Stewart Smith

Australian Commercial Credit
Licenced Insurance Brokers
Ph: 9816 3264
Fax: 9816 3270
25%—off normal costs. Leasing Equipment & cars.
Home/commercial mortgage loans.

Tortoise Head Guest House

French Island
Ph: 5980 1234
Fax: 5980 1222
10%—on accommodation, fully catered, adjacent bay.

Quarter Deck B&B

San Remo
Ph: 5678 5485
Mob: 018 550 235
E-mail: rosco@melbpc.org.au
20%—on B&B stays of two nights or more. Great views and close to many tourist attractions.

James Small, Solicitor

North Balwyn
Ph: 9830 0233
Fax: 9830 0222
20%—on standard conveyancing and will preparation fees (exc. govt. charges and disbursements).

Ultimate Business Service Opportunities

Strathmore
Ph: 9483 4417
Fax: 9374 2919
25%—on travel cards that allow 50% off world-wide hotels. 12 month g'tee.

Yodgee's of Prahran Leather and Travel Goods

Prahran
Ph: 9510 2413
Fax: 9510 2916
10%—computer briefcases and travel bags, R.M. Williams boots and clothing, Dr Martens footwear.

Special interest group meetings

Access (Database)

Ray Watson
raywatson_assist
@onastralia.com.au
9576 8520 BH & AH
2nd Monday
6.30 – 8.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Assembly & Other Languages

Felix Hofmann
felix@melbpc.org.au
9523 5400 AH
1st Thursday
7.00 – 10.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Ballarat

Ken Smith
kensmith@giant.bnc.com.au
5332 7851 BH & AH
1st Thursday
7.30 – 9.45 pm
(except school holidays)
Ballarat & Clarendon
College
614 Mair St, Ballarat
VicRoads map 254 L12

Bendigo

Russ Collins
5439 3708 BH & AH
Joe Henry
joeheny@melbpc.org.au
2nd Wednesday
7.30 – 10.00 pm
Girton Grammar School
105 Mackenzie St, Bendigo
(Vine Street entrance, then
follow the signs)
VicRoads map 282 K14

Clarion

Chris Livingstone
chrisliv@ozemail.com.au
9431 1897 BH & AH
4th Wednesday
7.00 – 10.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Communications

Philip Lew
phil@melbpc.org.au
9822 2998 BH
(brief calls please)
2nd Wednesday
7.00 – 9.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Daytime

Don Buchanan
donbucha@melbpc.org.au
9509 7119 BH & AH
Graeme Minto
gm@alphalink.com.au
(03) 9459 3986 BH & AH
2nd Thursday
10.00 am – 12 noon
Melb PC SIG Room

East

Keith Beresford
eastsig@melbpc.org.au
9733 5044 AH
9736 2515 BH
Margaret Brown
(03) 9874 5778
2nd Tuesday
7.30 – 10.00 pm
Multinet Theatre
200 Rooks Rd, Vermont
Melway map 62 H2

East Workshop

Aldo Pitre
eastsig@melbpc.org.au
Ken Gubbins
9898 5478 Ph/Fax
Sunday following the East
SIG meeting,
10.30 am – 2.30 pm
Multinet Theatre
200 Rooks Rd, Vermont
Melway map 62 H2

Graphics

Yahya Abdal-Aziz
yahya@melbpc.org.au
9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)
3rd Monday
7.30 – 9.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Hardware

Felix Hofmann
felix@melbpc.org.au
Bill Kessler
wok@melbpc.org.au
9523 5400
3rd Wednesday
7.00 – 11.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

LUBe

Thom Lyons
tomlyons@melbpc.org.au
9525 9793 BH & AH
3rd Thursday
7.00 – 10.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

MACE

(Melbourne Atari
Computer Enthusiasts)

Graham Hurford
hurfy@alphalink.com.au
9562 1023 AH
Roger Davies
rogerd@alphalink.com.au
2nd Sunday
10.00 am
Melb PC SIG Room

Music

Yahya Abdal-Aziz
yahya@melbpc.org.au
9562 1023 AH
(brief calls please)

Eric Best
ebest@melbpc.org.au
9376 1984 AH
2nd Thursday
7.30 – 9.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

New Users, Central

This SIG has closed.

New Users, East

Doug Brooke
dab@melbpc.org.au
9822 3458 BH & AH
2nd Tuesday
7.30 – 10.00 pm
(except January)
St Mark's Anglican Church,
Cnr Canterbury & Burke
Rds, Camberwell
Melway map 45 J10

OS/2

John Angelico
talldad@melbpc.org.au
9544 8792 BH & AH
4th Tuesday
6.30 – 10.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Programming

Ross Hall
5428 6470 AH
9699 4000 BH
Andrew Callaway
acal@ozemail.com.au
9619 4067 BH
2nd Tuesday,
7.30 – 10.00 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Quicken

Viv Martin
martinv@melbpc.org.au
9583 5372 BH & AH
4th Thursday
7.00 – 9.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Retired & Interested Persons

Ken Thomas
9884 5309 AH
Noel Peters
ripsig@melbpc.org.au
4th (not last) Friday
10.00 am – 12 noon
Lutheran Church,
25 Cypress Ave,
Glen Waverley
Melway map 62 A9

Video Editing (Linear)

Albert Vanzet
vanzet@melbpc.org.au
9439 1768 BH & AH
4th Monday
7.00 – 9.30 pm
45 Talbot Ave, Balwyn
Melway map 46 E8

Video Editing (Non-linear)

Lawrie Weston
westonl@diamondc.net.au
9742 3738
1st Tuesday
(including Cup day)
7.30 – 10.00 pm
Melb PC SIG room

Warragul

Gordon Ross
5623 5434 AH
1st Friday
7.30 – 10.00 pm
Warragul Education Centre
Smith St, Warragul
VicRoads map 337 Q8

Western Suburbs

Robert Mead
meadr@netstra.com.au
9312 5427 AH
4th Tuesday
7.00 – 9.00 pm
Sunshine Squash Centre,
cnr Kent and Stewart Sts,
Sunshine
Melway map 41 B2

Windows

Lynn Pollock
lynn@melbpc.org.au
9598 3186 AH
9533 5002 BH
1st Monday
7.00 – 9.30 pm
Melb PC SIG Room

Updates and corrections

Please send to
Joe Henry
SIG Co-ordinator:
joeheny@melbpc.org.au
or via the office.

SIG meeting reports

Bendigo

» Peter Ward

Our September meeting was addressed by Tim Jones, who has set up his own business in Castlemaine writing and maintaining accounting programs, and distributing shareware via the Internet. It was interesting that his Web site <http://www.aquatee.com> is located in US, rather than Australia due to cost.

Gold was the theme for October, with "Finders" from Dunolly along to tell us about their Web site and detector hire business.

For the November meeting the Assumption College Training unit will tell us about their courses.

December will be our Christmas Dinner meeting at the Foundry Arms, please book with Karen on (03) 5440 2576 (BH), or (03) 5472 3107 (AH) or Russell on (03) 5439 3708.

At our January meeting, Joe Henry will tell us about the Association of PC User Group's Annual Fall conference, which he will be attending in November. The conference is held in conjunction with Fall COMDEX, so Joe will also bring us up-to-date on the

latest and greatest software and hardware releases.

The committee is looking for new presenters and interesting site visits. Planned are speakers on genealogy and farm software.

Daytime

» Don Buchanan

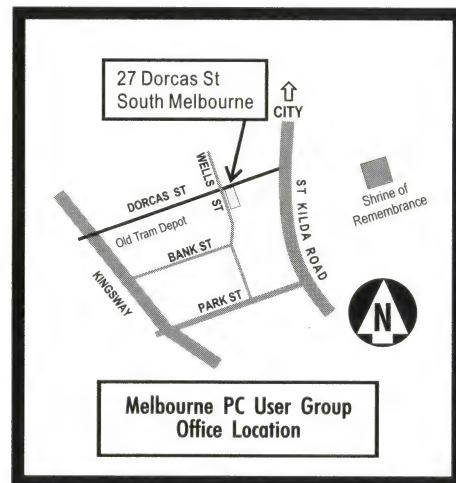
September

Graeme Minto looked after the whole successful morning at which Tom Coleman presented us with a journey with DOS, from its early days forward.

After a short DOS history, Tom took us through many of the most used DOS commands that are still useful these (Windows) days to give us access to a tremendous quantity and variety of information about our computers.

Directory, tree, path, attribute, registry, back-up, self-help, time/date etc. Ah yes, time/date eventually became a question about batteries on motherboards, and a relevant motherboard was produced for our benefit. We also learnt that the battery and its fixing method has changed over the years.

Next we were taken through DOS



‡ Many SIGs meet at Melb PC's premises, at 27 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne.

availability with Windows 3.x, then its involvement with Windows 95, finally to its deeper integration with Windows 98. Yes, DOS is still there if you need to use its commands, and have some basic knowledge of the required syntax, or if you want to run some DOS program.

October

We are scheduled to take advantage of Alan Fowler's long experience and deep knowledge as evidenced in his modem feature (*PC Update*, September 1998)

SIG and other meeting dates

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Notes: Public holiday is shaded These (‡) meet at Melb PC						I
2 Windows ‡	3 Video Editing (non-linear) ‡	4 Monthly meeting	5 Assembly & Other Languages ‡ Ballarat	6 Warragul	7	8 MACE ‡
9 Access (Database) ‡	10 Programming ‡ East New Users, East	11 Communications ‡ Bendigo	12 Daytime ‡ Music ‡	13	14	15 East Workshop
16 Graphics ‡	17 Committee ‡	18 Hardware ‡	19 LUBe ‡	20	21	22
23 Video Editing (Linear)	24 OS/2 ‡ Western Suburbs	25 Clarion ‡	26 Quicken ‡	27 Retired & Interested Persons	28	29
30						

November

After spending the morning on modems and associated communication aspects, any member attending who then re-reads Alan's feature, will surely have a better chance of satisfactory Internet/BBS results.

East

» Margaret Brown

The Millennium Bug—Step on it!

Blair McRae is the Executive Director of Business Services Marketing, Department of State Development, he was assisted by Jasmine Goh, in his summarisation of the actions businesses need to take before a deadline that none can afford to ignore.

His simple definition was that business systems will only be Y2000-compliant when their functionality cannot be affected by dates prior to, during or after 2000. A tall order indeed to test and possibly modify all computer systems and electrical equipment with embedded microchips.

Daunting descriptions of specific case studies suggest that some managers have a very limited understanding of the possible difficulties and feel inclined to "take the risk and settle out of court", while some may quite happily go out of business rather than face litigation.

Blair outlined the steps taken by the Victorian Government to help businesses tackle the problem, and

recommended business owners visit the Government's Y2000 Web site, <http://www.y2k.dsd.vic.gov.au> and/or call the Hotline on 1800 11 2000.

He ended on a lighter note with the thought that perhaps Puffing Billy will start working even better and be quite happy to move back to the old days.

Absolute beginners

Because of the number of bewildered faces evident during some Q & A sessions we decided a new session is in order, one to help with the most basic but nevertheless important problems that beginners face. So from October onwards we will be having a new session, starting at 7 pm (30 minutes before the normal meeting time). Don't believe the unkind rumour that this group could be the larger of the two, the numbers will be strictly limited!

Telnet

One of the benefits of a PowerPoint presentation is that a speaker who is concerned about audience reaction can program in the applause. Dave need not have worried, his talk describing the development of Telnet over the last 30 years was most interesting. However, one member found Dave's customised Toolbar even more so and the tutorial ended with a detailed explanation of its construction.

PowerPoint Tips

Richard John continued the theme demonstrating the addition and removal of Toolbars and Buttons, also the building of a personal Toolbar. He showed how these can reduce the number of steps required to perform a repetitive task or create useful shortcuts. Try a right-click on a blank area of the Menu Bar—select Customise—Shortcut Menus Toolbar. In particular, the Drawing Toolbar has many options you can use to enhance a document. As with all his presentations Richard made the entire Tutorial available on disk as a compressed Word document.

Trading table

This continues to be a great place to dispose of unwanted software or equipment. Simply attach an envelope—marked with your name and the suggested price—to each item, and bring everything along to the meeting—your discard may well be someone else's treasure.

Coming up—Matsushita's LAN technology now being installed in Singapore Air's planes.



MACE

» *Graham Hurford*

The newest member of the SIG family, MACE, The Atari SIG, had its inaugural meeting at Melb PC HQ in September.

We actually had a meeting a month prior, but that was a just a trial run, to test the engines, to put some air through the carbies.

But September was the biggie...MACE has been a club in its own right for over ten years, operating out of Monash University and having a wow of a time. But the time had come to come into the fold. The deal was just to good to reject.

Our first impression was that going to HQ was a bit like going to Auntie's for tea, or being looked after by your big brother, but we will grow into it.

We are not stuck in our ways. We can adapt. We are Atari users!

So, gentle reader, if you at a loss for things to do on the second Sunday of each month, at about 10 am, come in and say "Hi". Tell us all about the Atari you still have in the cupboard at home—see you there. At the next meeting, there promises to be more Ataris than you can point a mouse at.

OS/2

» *John Angelico*

Our September meeting was a Lotus night at IBM Southgate. About a dozen people were present to hear about Lotus SmartSuite for Warp 4.

Peter Marfatia, our IBM host, introduced Andrew Cunningham who stepped us through the key features of SmartSuite

- WordPro word processor
- 1-2-3 spreadsheet
- Freelance graphics and presentations
- Approach database front-end
- Organiser.

He focused on the key design factors of usability, response, connectivity and operational convenience, particularly with the SmartSuite ActionBox.

Questions followed and Andrew demonstrated his depth of technical knowledge to the satisfaction of those present to such an extent that his presentation concluded to generous applause from all present.

The success of the presentation has led

us to work on two more Lotus products later this year: Domino Groupware (alias Notes) and the Lotus e-Suite for online commerce (yes, even for small businesses!).

Quicken

» *Viv Martin*

As is usual, the first half hour or so was taken up with a lively question and answer time. Discussion ranged over Quicken's many features in all versions ranging back to DOS!

The main focus of the September meeting was to look at and compare Quicken's and QuickBooks' (Quicken's "big brother") ability to handle budgets.

Quicken's budget entry display was in a spreadsheet format making it a simple matter to construct. Each category with sub-categories is displayed as a folder but a single click on each folder displays all subcategories. In addition, the View can be by Months, Quarters, or Year and filled by Autocreate from a selected previous year as detail or average. There are numerous fill methods including fortnightly, fill row right, fill columns, individual (one by one) with the ability to clear row or clear all if a mistake is made.

We also noted that QuickBooks' mechanism for budget entry amounts was not as flexible, in not having as broad a view as Quicken's. However, QuickBooks does handle importing data from a spreadsheet. Although care is needed. QuickBooks tends to default to the US format on the spreadsheet, showing the year January to December, not July to June!

Over the coffee break, there was some discussion between two attendees (one a commission agent, one a programmer) about recording in a separate file, sales of various products from various suppliers to various customers. After the break, the situation was illustrated on screen and the separate secondary file was advocated to record the gross activities. The primary file of Income and Expenses would only require the net commission received as paid to the agent. Judging by the enthusiasm with which this information was received, the commission agent may have returned to work that same night!

Next month we hope to have a demonstration of QuickBooks and M.Y.O.B.

All Melbourne PC User Group

members are invited (and are entitled) to attend any Quicken SIG meeting. There is no charge. Visitors are also encouraged but after two free visits are invited to join the User Group. We currently get about 24 members attending, three quarters male, one quarter female.

Retired and Interested Persons

» *Bill Cooney*

We had five or six first-time attendees, three of whom were retired engineers from different fields of endeavour. No wonder the questions asked at the new users' sub-group are getting harder for the convenor to answer. More and more questions about the vagaries of Internet exploration are surfacing from members, too. From one who has not yet taken the plunge, it seems a veritable minefield. Odd that in this age of technological wizardry there is not a more simple means of access than all the questions would suggest. I might wait a little while longer yet!

Congratulations to George Skarbek on the launch of his latest book. Several copies found owners at the meeting and it is a beauty. Well put together and very simple to use. Maybe I could use it to answer some of those curly queries mentioned earlier.

Greg Stewart told us about his experience with the "Internet to the Outback" program. Greg went to a group in Parkes. Some of the experiences, including the flooding in the area, added great spice to the time spent there making new friends and achieving new goals.

A slight glitch in the main presentation gave Ian Bock the opportunity to show us some of his photograph restoration and manipulation techniques. Ian uses his scanner and Photoshop to set up the picture as he wants it then photographs the screen of his computer, using a 100 mm lens at f/8 for half-a-second or so, depending on screen brightness. Does it work? Well going by the results he showed us, it works very well indeed! The film Ian uses for this process is Kodak TM400 or VX400, both of which are over-exposure tolerant.

Shane Bryan from Pinewood Photo & Digital also showed some of the results achieved using Photoshop and Paint Shop Pro, also quite an eye opener and rather disturbing in the amazing changes

in picture quality and content. No longer can we say "the camera doesn't lie"! Both demonstrators held the attention of the 110 that attended.

Thanks to Ian and Shane for stimulating our interest in yet another facet of computer use. Thanks also to Henk for being on the spot with his gear to enable the demo to go ahead.

Leigh Hawke is looking into venues for our end of year luncheon in December so if you are interested you are welcome to join us. Bring your own appetite (and wallet of course!).

Video Editing (Linear)

» *Albert Vanzet*

The latest VideoDirector video editing program, Studio 400, still dominates our meetings. Because of an unexpected delay in the import to the distributors in Australia few members had yet received the upgrade from Studio 200 to Studio 400. We are promised that delivery is imminent.

First

During the first half of our meeting we went over the various aspects of Studio 400 and the impact it may have on our video editing techniques.

We were shown three versions of an edited video. One version had used Studio 400's SmartSound technique, while the other two videos had audio-dubbed background music. The different music selections emphasised how music affects the experience of the video as well as how the actual music selected can change the mood of the production.

Despite the slight hiccups that we heard using SmartSound, members overwhelmingly preferred the music produced by Studio 400's SmartSound technique.

We were delighted to find that this program includes AMCAP Capture, a feature that, although not directly related to video editing, is a bonus for those who wish to do some video-conferencing. (Who knows what the future brings; maybe we will end up having our monthly meetings on the Internet.)

Sell night

As was announced in our previous SIG report we held our first Sell night. Three members responded to the invitation to bring their surplus video and video editing equipment to the meeting which were displayed for sale at member-friendly prices. The equipment ranged from a Hi8 video

camera, some sound and video cards, filters and even a 14-inch computer monitor. Several members were very happy to pick up some real bargains.

After

During the second half of the evening we got into some real video capture and editing. We made a short video production using scenes from a recording made at the last Avalon Air Show. The fact that all went without any problems was reassuring for those members anxiously waiting for the upgrade or for those intending to purchase the new Studio 400 program.

Owners of Panasonic VCRs and video cameras were delighted to hear Pinnacle's promise of a new version 1.03 of Studio 400 that would soon be ready for download. It is expected that this version will solve the problems they are having with this equipment. Version 1.03 will be available for download at www.pinnaclesys.com/support/Studio400/download.html

We hope members who have ordered a Studio 400 upgrade will have the upgrade before the October meeting, because we expect members to contribute to the meeting with edited videos. Good or bad.

Looking further into the future, the two video editing SIGs— Linear and Non-Linear—plan a combined meeting for early in December. The tentative date is Thursday 10 December. The meeting will be held at the Balwyn Welfare Association building at 45 Talbot Avenue, Balwyn.

We invite members from both groups to contribute to this meeting and show some of their short (maybe two to five minute) videos edited using any video editing techniques.

We also plan to have another sell night at that combined meeting, thereby extending the equipment for sale to both techniques. So bring in your surplus video and video editing equipment or accessories.

Windows

» *John Swale*

The October meeting found around 50 people in the SIG room being interrupted by workmen checking for water leakage from the flood in the building next door. There is always something interesting at the start of Lynn's meetings. As members arrived we were



Great Computing Moments number 236.

shown the future in computing with Microsoft people talking to their cars to get their e-mail. I was glad to see that they were also well behind in attending to that particular task.

The meeting proper started with question time and problems such as

- How is it possible to share hard disks between two PCs with one running Windows 95 and the other Windows 98 but only installing the software once?

The Registry is different in each operating system so while you can use Boot Manager to load the appropriate one the software has to be installed twice, once for each operating system.

- Having uninstalled some programs in the incorrect manner I installed a program which was developed in Italy. This was uninstalled using a commercial uninstall utility. If I go into Add/Remove programs, the program is still there. If I use Remove I am told that the program cannot be uninstalled but the message is in Italian.

This will require a reinstall of Windows 95. It shows that sometime uninstallers do not completely remove applications.

- Can Windows 95 have multiple users on one PC and provide each user with security over the individual files?

For good security you need to be running Windows NT although a program like Magic Folders may provide some security.

- Previously the Internet dial up screen held the password. Now it shows the remember password box as being ticked but the password is not remembered.

Rename or delete the *.PWL files and then create a new connection.

- How to correct Windows for Victorian daylight saving

Get the program TZEDIT from the BBS, Kernel Toys or the Resource kit. You can also use it to name the time zone to say Melbourne instead of Sydney.

- How to transfer data between a laptop and a desktop machine without a network

You can use a Laplink-type cable connected between the parallel ports and use Direct Cable

Connection which comes with Windows 95. This will preserve the long filenames but will only operate at the slow speed of the parallel port.

- How to solve a video card problem when loading Windows 98 on a machine with an old video card, the card was detected and installed and the installation finished with the message to restart Windows. On restarting Windows, it detected the video card, installed it and finished with the message to restart Windows.

The only way to break the loop was to not restart Windows, turn the machine off and replace the video card with a new one.

Next we had a carryover from last month's session on backup with a comparison of Ghost and DriveImage for backing up a disk drive. The programs have similar features and enable you to save a compressed image of the disk on another drive. If you back up the C: drive you will be able to recover very quickly if your data is corrupted or if you have to install a new drive. We compared the latest version (5) of Ghost from Symantec to PowerQuest's version 1 DriveImage, although version 2 is now available.

A 170 MB drive was backed up by Ghost in 2 minutes and compressed to 80 MB. Drive image took 6 minutes to compress to 76 MB but it is understood that version 2 is faster and provides more compression. Both programs have many other features and can be used to set up large numbers of machines to a standard configuration.

Lynn distributed the Tips Sheet and explained some more registry tools in particular the setting for SCANREG.INI.

Other tips covered

- Restoring corrupted desktop icons
- Overcoming problems with insufficient memory to convert hard disks to FAT32
- Using the patch file 1916.EXE with Internet Explorer 4.0 with service pack 1 to overcome problems accessing FTP sites
- How to get your modem to tell you how the last connection performed.

The final session, started with a demonstration of how to use typical fax software that comes bundled with most modems. Lynn showed how to

set up the main parameters and phone books. Using the fax was as simple as printing to the modem instead of the normal printer. This worked well and the test fax was received by the Melb PC office fax machine.

Receiving a fax had to be deferred to another time because the group's Secretary couldn't get the office fax to connect to the outside line.

We finished the evening with a demonstration of how to do a flash upgrade of a Kflex modem to make it V.90. The upgrade was downloaded from the EDGE Product Support Internet site (upgrades are also available from the Auslinx site, which also has some other tools). There were several warnings in this demonstration.

The first be sure that you get the correct patch for your particular model of modem. The upgrade is a self-extracting file with a readme file that needs to be studied carefully.

The second warning was to ensure that nothing interferes with the flash upgrade. Make sure that you don't lose power, turn off any screensaver, and disable any background tasks such as virus checkers. Some modems have been made unusable by interruptions to the upgrade.

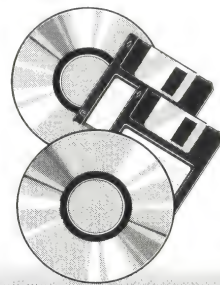
Once the upgrade has been done you reboot and have Windows 95 find the modem. Then point to the new driver and you are ready. You will usually get two modems appearing in the selection list—the old one and the updated one. Either one can be used as the old one has in fact been updated.

The test of the updated modem did not show any increase in speed and this was attributed to limitations in line quality. However Lynn's experience is that the performance is significantly improved and therefore worth the effort of upgrading.

In answer to a question—yes you can go back to Kflex but why would you want to?

Lynn then showed how to implement his tip on displaying modem performance.

Join us next month when there will be the usual fun, Bob will be back from his holiday, and hopefully I will have learnt how to operate the office fax so we can complete the PC fax demonstration. □



Shareware/Freeware library update

Updates

Melb 2540

TransMac for Windows v3.1

TransMac for Windows is a utility that can access Macintosh disks and copy them to and from your PC. This will enable you to use your disks, whether they are Macintosh HFS format disks, HD diskettes, CD-ROMs, Zip, Jaz, Bernoulli and EZ-135 disks, SCSI devices (SyQuest, optical drives, hard drives, etc.) and convert files between these formats. You can also format Mac diskettes with the registered version of this program. Low density (400 KB/800 KB) Mac diskettes cannot be read by PC floppy disk controllers, so they are not supported. Long filenames are supported under Win 95/98. TransMac uses Windows/DOS system functions to store and manipulate dates. These functions are designed to operate well beyond the year 2000. The only place a two digit year comes into play is in displaying the date on screen. TransMac has been tested for year 2000 problems but none have been found. This version provides a configuration tool to eliminate editing the .INI file, separate installations for 16- and 32-bit programs, support for IDE Zip (32-bit) and multi-session support for SCSI CD drives. You can use this shareware version to copy files of up to 1.4 MB. TransMac requires an 80386 or faster processor, Win 3.1x/95/98/NT, and a Macintosh disk in any of the formats mentioned above. This disk contains both the 16- and 32-bit versions of TransMac. Win NT users must install the 32-bit version, while Win 3.1x users must install the 16-bit version. Win

95/98 users can install either, but the 32-bit version is faster. If you still have real mode drivers in Win 95, you may need to use the 16-bit version in order for TransMac to see your drives. Regn US\$64 for either version.

Melb 8150

Easy Word v10.4

Easy Word is an easy-to-use word processor which includes line drawing, a spelling checker, a table entry mode, macros, and an in-built backup system. It will batch print odd and even pages separately for double-sided printing. Easy Word has a secure erase facility for classified documents. This update has been recompiled to run on Pentium II processors. Previous versions could not run above 233 MHz. Easy Word requires a 16MHz 80286 or faster processor, DOS 5.0 or later, 640 KB of RAM and 2 MB of hard disk space. Regn GBP25.

Melb 8610

ClipMate v4.5.2 (32-bit)

Melb 9245

ClipMate v4.2.6 (16-bit)

The native cut/copy/paste capability of Windows works well for transferring single items of data, but becomes very cumbersome if you want to move a lot of data, or keep data for extended periods of time. Every time that you cut or copy, the new data overwrites the previous clipboard contents, whether you were ready for that or not! ClipMate works alongside the regular clipboard functionality in Windows by capturing every piece of data (Clip Item) that you copy to the clipboard, and storing it in one of its internal Collections. ClipMate can easily store hundreds of these Clip Items. Once the data is in ClipMate, you can select an item and it is automatically placed back on the clipboard, ready to paste into any application. You can view, print, edit, reformat, convert to Upper/Lower case, search for, rename and reorder clip items. You can create an unlimited number of Collections in which to store your data, name them anything you like, and have full control over the retention rules, so you can create collections to fit your own work process. You can use the default "Short-

Term" Collection for a "catch-all" Collection, and create others for topics such as "Tips & Tricks", "Hot Internet URLs", "Project X", "Programming", "Clip Art", or "USENET News". You can "glue" together several text items to form one big item that can be pasted all at once, and ClipMate's PowerPaste function will allow you to quickly paste a sequence of items into an application by sensing that you've pasted, and automatically advancing to the next clip item. The 16-bit version requires Win 3.1x and the 32-bit version requires Win 95/98/NT. The registration fee of US\$25 provides a printed manual and access to advanced features such as Collection Management and Printing which will cease to work after the evaluation period ends.

Melb 8622

Labels, Cards and More v2.5

You can create labels, cards, envelopes and more, easily, with this program. It has many options and features, including pre-defined layouts for labels, cards, envelopes and full page displays. Its support for many clipart file formats, zoom commands and grid, makes alignment and detail work easy. Text may be Rotated Text, Lines or Boxes in any size, font and style. There are "special" objects to link to data files for mailing lists, counters, quick addressing and personal information. You can print on anything from labels, to cards, to tags, and even full page displays, on any Windows compatible printer. The WYSIWYG editor supports drag-and-drop editing and sizing. The program supports metric measurement units, the complete set of Avery Template Layouts, and includes online help. New in this version is the ability to use shadowed text, different back-grounds, an improved Card Expert, a built-in address book for mailing labels and new templates. The program now supports JPEG, TIFF, PNG, BMP, PCX and WMF graphics files for use. Labels, Cards and More requires Win 95, a printer and a mouse. Regn US\$25. A 16-bit version of this program, Label Designer Plus, is available on disk Melb 9117.

**Shareware is just
\$5 for the first disk,
\$4 for the next
and \$3 for all others,
per order, post included.**

**See the order form
on page 32.**

Melb 8839 n-Track Studio v1.0.8

n-Track Studio is a digital multi-track recorder program for the Win 95 and Win NT operating systems. This program will turn your computer into a powerful multi-track recorder, without expensive hardware requirements. Working with n-Track is easy: to start a new song, just record the first track (usually the rhythm base), then click the stop button. Now you are ready to add a new track, or to overdub the one previously recorded: click again on the record button, make sure you are ready to play and click on the OK button. To edit a track that you have recorded with a wave editor (such as Cool Edit on disk Melb 8705), simply double-click on the desired track in the list box. This update adds the ability to convert WAV files into MPEG-3 files for better audio compression. Master channel effects have been implemented also, together with many, minor bug fixes. n-Track Studio has increased the maximum song length to 66 minutes of recording. n-Track requires an 80486DX-66 or faster processor, Win 95/NT 4.0 or later, 8 MB of RAM, a full-duplex sound card and a microphone. Regn US\$30.

New disks

Melb 2651 CrossFont For Windows v1.1

CrossFont is a Win 95/98/NT utility that converts Mac TrueType and PostScript Type1 fonts to the Windows PC and PC TrueType and Type1 fonts to the Mac. The program supports long filenames, automatic sensing of the file type and automatic assignment of kerning from appropriate metric files. Character outlines, metrics, hinting and internal font information are not changed during the conversion process. Other features include a drag and drop interface and online help. The shareware version of CrossFont can convert fonts one at a time without style attributes, while the registered version can batch convert to many file types at once and it can create font families with up to four styles. CrossFont is 32-bit program that requires Win 95/98/NT. Regn US\$45.

Melb 2652 MidiGate v0.86

MidiGate is a Windows-based MIDI audio file player and Web browser helper application. It will start playing one or more MIDI files as soon as they are chosen. The MIDI files can be set to

loop once either the file, or the collection of files that are playing, have finished. It features a mixer setup and it can recall your favorite files, or the most recently accessed files. MidiGate is very customisable, and it can be set to minimise upon startup. It requires Win 3.1 or later, a mouse, a sound card that has been correctly installed, and a VGA or better graphics card. Regn US\$10.

Melb 2653 3.5" Disk Label Creator v2.0

3.5" Disk Label Creator was designed as an add-in for Word 95 or Word 97. The program enables you to create 3.5" diskette labels from within Word with ease, and supports labels from most vendors in a single column, or from 3x5 15-label sheets. You can create labels for any purpose, with coloured graphics, very quickly. The program requires Win 95 or later, and either Word 95 or Word 97. Regn US\$15.

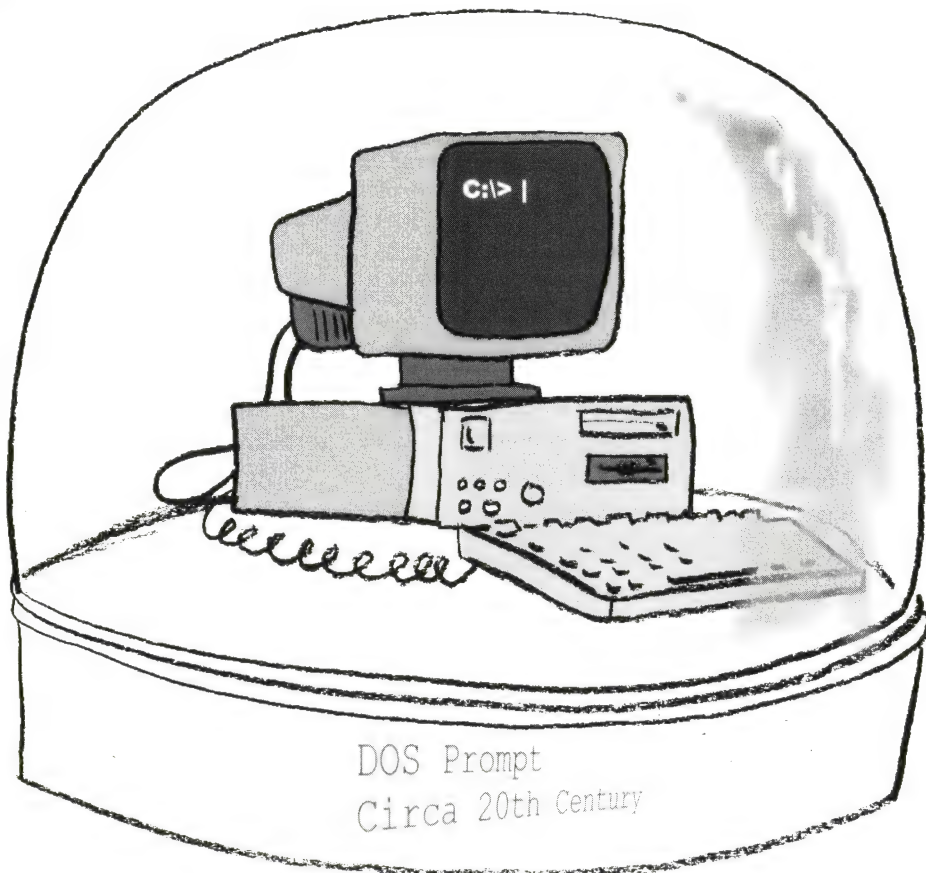
Melb 2654 Business Card Creator v2.0

Business Card Creator was designed as an add-in for Word 95 or later. The program can create business cards catered to your individual tastes. You can create professional looking business cards with this program, inserting

graphics and text effects easily. Built-in macros will copy the created card to each of the other cells, to create a page of ten cards. Business Card Creator requires Win 95 or later, and either Word 95 or Word 97. Regn US\$15.

Melb 9257 AS-EASY-AS for Win 95/NT v1.6

This is a 32-bit version of the very popular DOS spreadsheet program AS-EASY-AS, with more than 130 math, financial, scientific, statistical, string, date and time functions. A very easy to use program, it is designed for simplicity and ease of use, while still being extremely powerful in every way. It also boasts superb graphics as well as a new macro programming language implementation, minimum/maximum linear programming, linear and nonlinear multi-variate regression, and internal and external user-definable functions. AS-EASY-AS also features extensive on-line help and has many of the features found in higher priced commercial equivalents. It requires Win 95/NT 4.0 or later, a mouse and a printer with appropriate drivers. Regn US\$59.



Melb 9258**Idle GimmIP**

Working out what your IP address is after logging into your dial-up ISP account can be quite difficult. The dynamic IP assigned to you by your ISP is rarely the same as the last time you logged in. GimmIP helps you by querying your ISP's network for your address. GimmIP constantly checks to see if you are connected and when you are, its colour changes to indicate that you are online. Finger, Ping, Trace Route, and Name Server Lookup features also complement GimmIP. There are also sensors that can be configured to keep track of overall speed and latency. These visual sensor indicators not only provide handy information for the curious, but they can also be used to determine any network problems that may occur. This program is well designed and easy to use. It requires Win 95/98 and an Internet connection. Regn US\$13.

Melb 9259**NeoTrace v1.22**

Do you have little patience for unexplained holdups when you're browsing the Internet? NeoTrace is an Internet utility used to trace the connections between computers on the Internet. It uses a super fast multi-threaded version of Traceroute to trace the connection from your computer to other sites on the Internet, and analyse this information. What sets NeoTrace apart from many other Traceroute utilities is the way in which it displays your Internet travels graphically. It uses colour-coded icons to represent node types and speeds. It displays the IP address, domain name and various response-time calculations for each node, and it provides constant Ping updates. You can right-click your mouse on any icon to access Whois

details about who owns a particular domain, open domains in your Web browser, and learn much more about the paths traveled in your browsing. Documentation (in PDF format) is included. NeoTrace requires Win 95/98/NT 4.0, a connection to the Internet and the version of WinSock. Regn US\$25 for commercial use and US\$20 for personal use.

Melb 9260**B-Jigsaw for Windows v1.1.5**

B-Jigsaw (short for BMP-Jigsaw) is the electronic version of the classic jigsaw puzzle, with pieces shaped just like real jigsaw pieces. The program includes two sample images but you can make as many jigsaw puzzles as you like by using your own bitmap (.BMP) files. So the more .BMP files you have, the more puzzles you have. B-Jigsaw does not support compressed .BMP files and it cannot use very small .BMP files. Other features include the ability to paste an image from the clipboard, online help, a scoreboard and three levels of difficulty. The Beginner level uses large jigsaw pieces, the Intermediate level uses normal sized pieces, and the Expert level uses small pieces. Both versions of B-Jigsaw require an 80486 or faster processor with 8 MB of RAM and a mouse. The 16-bit version requires Win 3.1 or later while the 32-bit version requires Win 3.1 or later with Win32s, or Win 95/98/NT. The disk contains both versions of the program. Regn US\$10.

Melb 9261 RuPuzz for Windows v1.0

The object of RuPuzz is to rearrange the cells on the north, east, centre, west and south sides so that the cells on each side match a certain pattern. Although RuPuzz may remind you of a flattened Rubik's cube there are no relationships between the puzzle sides in RuPuzz. For example, moving the first column of the centre side will not alter the cells on west side. You can choose one of three puzzle patterns, that is, Same Colour, Rectangle or Plus, with the level of difficulty ranging from two cells per side up to six cells per side. You can change the cell images from solid colour, fruits or various simple shapes, just to add some variety to your puzzle activity. Other features include online help and a scoreboard. The disk contains a 16-bit and a 32-bit version of the program. Both versions of RuPuzz are fully functional and require an 80486 or faster processor with 8 MB of RAM and a mouse. The 16-bit version

requires Win 3.1 or later, while the 32-bit version requires Win 95/98/NT. Regn US\$10 for either version.

Melb 9262 The Risk Analyzer v7.4.98

The Risk Analyzer has been designed as an add-in for Excel Versions 5 and later, for serious users who would like to automate the complex process of evaluating the financial risk of a business or investment proposal. The Risk Analyzer is a fast, menu-driven tool that doesn't require a knowledge of statistics to produce a highly detailed risk analysis complete with all the tables and charts necessary for assessing whether your bright idea is a winner or not. Upon loading the Analyzer, all of the tools are made available from an additional toolbar to your normal Excel toolbars. With a logical menu structure, The Risk Analyzer easily leads you through the individual stages of analysis. Very detailed online documentation is included, with supporting sample worksheets, to complement a thorough tutorial. The Risk Analyzer requires Win 95 or later and Excel version 5, 95 or 97. Regn US\$130.

Melb 9263**The Spreadsheet Assistant v4.0**

If you thought Excel had more than enough features for any reasonable requirement, this package may change your mind. It combines a number of aids to productivity (mainly in the form of easier ways to handle data and move around worksheets), along with extra functions, to add about 200 new features to any version of Excel from Version 5 upwards. In the program, the emphasis is on time-savers for everyday use, rather than on exotic tools such as those provided by some other tool packs. Most enhancements are available from a new menu, the Quick menu. The many tools consist of the ability to select or fill a range of cells without having your worksheet scroll, the ability to hide worksheets (when working with two which are widely separated), and a nice "Sticky Notes" feature for adding quick comments which don't have to be printed. Other useful features include conditional cell selection and some file management enhancements. The Spreadsheet Assistant also includes a very detailed and comprehensive help file. It requires Win 95 or later and Excel versions 5.0, 95 or 97. Regn US\$40.

The order form for disks from the Melb PC Shareware/Freeware library is on page 32 of each issue of PC Update.

Shareware is just \$5 for the first disk, \$4 for the next and \$3 for all others, per order, post included.

Melb 9264 Rogsoft Notepad+ v1.11

NotePad+ is a drop-in replacement for the Win 95/NT 4 notepad but it has a number of advantages over the standard NotePad program. NotePad+ has a theoretical limit on file sizes of 20 MB. However, loading files larger than 1 MB may be slow (depending on your system). You can open multiple files, keep track of up to 16 recent files (you decide how many), choose your own margin size for the edit windows, and drag-and-drop selected text within an open file and between open files. NotePad+ has smarter hot keys, user-definable fonts and colours and user-definable Open and Save Dialog filters. NotePad+ is meant for plain, person-readable text files only. It is not suitable for binary files or files that use escape characters, etc. NotePad+ doesn't support the printing of page numbers but it can use the screen font when printing. The program is MAPI enabled to send files through e-mail, but this requires that you have to have a MAPI server installed. If you have Microsoft Exchange (Windows Messaging) on your system, it will act as your MAPI server by default. You could use Outlook Express or Eudora also. NotePad+ cannot send mail via Netscape, since it does not support MAPI. The program has numerous other improvements over the standard notepad. NotePad+ has been optimised to speed up the creation of the edit windows, maximising/restoring Windows and switching between files. The program is a 100% 32-bit compiled Win32 executable, and it does not need run-time libraries. NotePad+ requires Win 95/98/NT 4.0. This version of NotePad+ is freeware.

Melb 9265 Master Converter v2.0

Master Converter is a program that instantly converts a value from one unit to another. Whether it be temperature, kinematic viscosity, or data transfer rates, Master Converter allows you to easily enter a value in one unit and display the same value as another unit. There are over 550 different kinds of units in 29 categories available for conversion. If you have a need for a special conversion, custom units and categories can be easily configured. Master Converter features a very user-friendly interface, which is clearly labeled with text boxes for values, and drop-down menus for selecting the unit for the original and the converted values. It requires Win 95/98 or later. Regn US\$15.

Melb 9266

WinAmp is a Windows-based audio utility. WinAmp supports both MPEG-2 and MPEG-3 audio streams, and it can manage multiple CD-ROM drives mounted in the same system. Other types of audio streams, such as WAV and MIDI are also supported, though they are not effected by the built-in graphic equaliser. The graphic equaliser gives the user the ability to alter the frequency response during playback. Winamp includes a playlist editor/creator, that you can use to select multiple files to play at once, and can be a mixture of audio types. The program also includes Nitrate, an MPEG audio layer decoder for better sound playback. WinAmp supports special plugins and skins, which can be used to customise the player to your preference. It requires Win 95/NT 4.0 or later, 16 MB of RAM, a Windows-supported sound card with the drivers correctly installed, and a VGA or better graphics card and monitor. Regn US\$10.

Melb 9267 Directory Printer v2.0

Directory Printer enables you to print directory listings from within Win 95/98/NT, a capability which is not provided by Windows itself. You can print either single directories or entire trees. When printing trees, the number of levels of subdirectories printed can be specified. You can choose the fields to print (such as long and short file name, size, date/time) and you can sort by any field. The program prints the

WinAmp v2.03

total number and size of files.

Optionally, the program will print a summary listing (subdirectories only, without files). Directory Printer can prints to ASCII text or comma-delimited files if required. Complete instructions for using the program are available in the online help. This evaluation version of Directory Printer will cease to function after 30 days if it is not registered. The program requires Win 95/98/NT. Regn US\$30.

Melb 9268 Ecopad Text Editor v2.60

Ecopad is a text editor replacement for Windows Notepad and it is as easy to use as Notepad. You can print 1, 2, 4 or 8 condensed pages on each physical sheet of paper and you can define headers and/or footers on each condensed page. Ecopad can load and print files of up to 32 MB in size. It is excellent for printing source code listings or long text files, so it helps you to save money and trees at the same time! Ecopad is compatible with all True Type fonts and point sizes and it supports any printer that can be used with Win 3.1. Ecopad can load files created with Windows Write but it does not attempt to remove embedded pictures or OLE objects when loading them. Therefore, if the Write file that you are trying to load contains embedded pictures or OLE objects, you will get garbage characters where the pictures or objects would appear. Windows Write (.WRI) files are always loaded as read-only, so the original file



is not changed in any way when loading/printing with Ecopad. Other features include a print preview, separately selectable screen and printing fonts, conversion between DOS and Windows character sets, and complete on-line help. This version will shut down after 20 days or 60 uses, whichever comes last. It requires an 80286 or faster processor, Win 3.1, 4 MB of RAM and 500 KB of disk space. It will also run without problems on Win 95 and Win NT 3.51. The registration fee of US\$20 provides a registration number to register all future versions of Ecopad (both 16 and 32 bit). A 32-bit version of Ecopad is available on disk Melb 8575.

Melb 9269-9270 **Redhand V4.0 (2-disk set)**

If you have ever fallen victim to sneaky people who use your computer when you're not around, then you may be able to use the security features of RedHand. Unauthorised users can be caught red-handed and a decent argument detailing exactly what they did on your computer can be delivered. RedHand sits in the background, either completely invisible or with a small icon in the system tray, logging the programs being used on your system. When you have logged into RedHand with your password, RedHand will inform you what has been going on in your absence, with a detailed description. The AutoStart function allows RedHand to be loaded automatically when Windows starts, while other features can provide extra security to prevent unauthorised use before it happens. You can customise and disable many items, including Start Menu options, Network properties and System options. And for those who like to restrict the ability of system intruders, a completely new desktop can be setup for those times when the computer is left unattended. The program can also send the log via the network to the Network Administrator. RedHand requires Win 95/NT and a mail server for network use. Regn US\$99.

Melb 9271 **Search4 v3.0**

Search4 consists of a small dialog box with which you enter a search term. Finding information quickly and easily is Search4's aim and that is what it does. By employing up to four different search engines at once, Search4 reduces the time required for searching and presents you with numerous pages of

results. Results can be displayed in separate browser windows or in frames, which can be formatted into rows, columns or a grid. This shareware version is limited to 25 uses. It requires Win 95/Win NT.

Melb 9272 **Sentry 98 v1.4**

If keeping your Win 95 machine secure is important to you, then Sentry 98 may be just what you need. Sentry 98 allows you to easily set up and manage separate accounts for each user with specific options and restrictions. Each user can have their own Desktop and Program Folder settings, while the Run, Find and Control Panel settings in the Start Menu can be disabled. Going even further, access to drives and programs, as well as booting options can be restricted also. Implementing these options is relatively easy, although care must be taken when placing restrictions on important parts of the operating system, such as booting options. Sentry 98's interface is well designed and the different options are categorised under heading tabs. It requires Win 95/NT 4.0 or later. Regn GBP25.

Melb 9273 **Wintune v2.0**

Wintune is a system analyser that runs under Win 3.1. The program will analyse the CPU, FPU, Video, Disk, Cache, RAM and Applications which are installed in your system. Then it will provide tips and advice on the best way to improve the performance of your system. This is done by presenting a report and comparing the results to other manufacturers machines. The results of Wintune's testing are stored in a proprietary binary format, but they may be saved in a Comma Separated Variable format; an ASCII format that is accepted as input by most spreadsheet and database programs. You can try loading the comma-delimited version of the test results into a spreadsheet and graphing some of the variables from test to test. This can provide a great way to see how your system's performance changes over time! Wintune includes online help. Wintune was designed for 80386, 80486, and Pentium class Intel-based computers. It will run only in 386 Enhanced Mode, so it will not work on an 80286 processor. It requires Win 3.1 or higher and 4 MB of RAM. Wintune is freeware. A 32-bit version of this program is available on disk Melb 8585.

Melb 9274 **Doctor Help v4.0**

Doctor Help (or DOC to HLP) is a program containing a variety of Word for Windows macros designed to translate Word files into Windows Help documents. Encapsulated in a template file the program uses the outline structure of the document (defined by the heading 1, heading 2, etc, styles to build a hierarchically structured Windows Help file (.HLP). Cross references can also be defined, and keywords are automatically defined. The program is not intended to be an all-singing, all-dancing, help development system. But it is good at transforming existing, written documentation into on-line Windows Help files. The intention is that you can maintain one source file which can be printed or transformed into on-line Help. This is very useful for anyone who wants to build hyperdocuments without learning a more complex tool. Dr Help saves your document to disk before it tries to change it, saving the document to its original name. It also saves it under a name of filename.NEW and modifies only the .NEW file. The shareware version of the program is limited to 30 topics, while the registered version has a limit of 1,000. Minimum requirements are Win 3.x, Word 6.0 and version 3.10 of the Help Compiler. Regn A\$28.

Melb 9275 FreeSTYLE For Word v1.10

FreeSTYLE is an add-on program for Word for Windows that builds on Microsoft's use of styles to radically improve the way you work with Word. FreeSTYLE offers improved structuring (for consistency and ease-of-use across all documents), improved formatting (to instantly reformat your entire document), improved navigation (to jump instantly to any defined content or text), and improved document handling (to handle multiple versions from the same file). The power of FreeSTYLE is available to all of your documents through a single, easily-installed Word template, called FSTYLE.DOT. This offers its own menu, control and shortcuts in addition to Word's own functionality. Word's normal working practice is not affected. FreeSTYLE puts you in complete control of your documents and the content they contain. By marking content and taking control, you can put the sense into - and get the sense back out of - all of the documents you create. The program includes an illustrated 12 page

manual. FreeStyle requires an 80386 or faster processor Win 3.1 or later, 4 MB of RAM and 1 MB of disk space. You will need also an English language version of Word for Windows (version 6, 95 or 97. Regn US\$30.

Melb 9276-9277

LanExpert Multilingual Support System v1.2 (2-disk set)

LanExpert has been designed to support Windows programs that can display Chinese, Japanese or Korean characters under Win 3.1x and Win 95. It supports Simplified Chinese (GB2312-80), Traditional Chinese (Big-5), Shift_JIS and KSC-5601-1987 encoded characters. The coding can be switched easily between these languages depending on the document being viewed. LanExpert will auto-detect Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese and Shift_JIS in a single document and it will auto-detect most Japanese Win 95 menu items. The Internet is an easy way for people to contact each other and most of LanExpert's features have been designed with the Internet in mind. You should be able to use the user-friendly interface of LanExpert to view different languages at the same time. The program requires Win 3.1x or later.

Melb 9278

Office Toys 98.2

There's nothing particularly toy-like about this product, which provides numerous enhancements and new features for Microsoft Word 97. The emphasis is on providing shortcuts to speed up common tasks, mainly via a new Toys menu and a modified default toolbar. The default toolbar now sports pop-down menus for character and paragraph formatting, and adds new functions to the Copy and Paste buttons. Two new toolbars are

available: a Toys bar at the left of the display and a SpeedBar just above the status line. Added to these are a large variety of additional enhancements including project management, easier table construction, a clever window organiser for viewing multiple documents or tasks, and a great deal more. Office Toys 98.2 requires Win 95 or later, and Word 97, properly installed on your system. Regn US\$40.

Melb 9279

Popup Thesaurus Menu v2.0

The Popup Thesaurus Menu provides you with quick and easy access to synonyms, alternative word meanings, and antonyms from within any Microsoft Word 97 document. To use the Popup Thesaurus Menu, simply right-click on any word in a document, choose "Thesaurus" from the shortcut menu, and you will be presented with a popup menu that lists synonyms and antonyms for the selected word. It requires Win 95 or later, and Word 97.

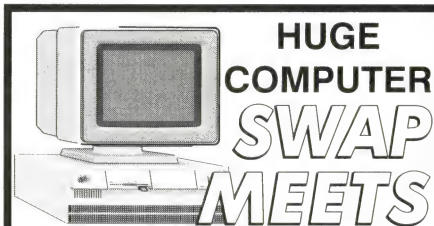
Deletions

Calypso (version 1.0) on disks Melb 9067-9069 has been replaced by version 2.40.41 on disks 9205-9207.

Video Display Editor (version 1.8D) on disk Melb 1913 has been replaced by VDE (version 1.85) on disk Melb 2644.

Correction

Last month we described The Cross Trainer (version 2.8) as a two-disk set on disks Melb 9244 and 9245. The program will fit on a single disk (Melb 9244).



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Unemployed at 45

Aged 45, I was unemployed for the better part of 15 months. There were small projects here and there, but that permanent job proved to be elusive. Many people who know me were baffled by my inability to find a job; the answer to that mystery will never be found. While it is fresh in my mind, I will endeavour to share my experience in the hope of helping others.

Redundancy

Being made redundant, retrenched, laid off, downsized—all euphemisms for losing one's job involuntarily and all equally painful. Sadly, there is every indication that we will see more of this in the future.

This was my second experience of redundancy. Early one June morning, I was surprised to see my Sydney-based boss in my office, unannounced. Before I had time to think, I was given the bad news. "Please clear out your desk within 30 minutes." My e-mail access had gone, but I stretched those 30 minutes into a couple of hours. I knew I had several unfinished tasks, and I took the time to jot down notes to my successors, which also helped to calm me down.

Early warning radar

Get to know how well your company is doing. Ask yourself how long could you survive financially if you lost your job without warning. What type of package can you expect from your employer? Only you can answer those questions and make allowances for a financial buffer.

I had misread the warning signs because our Australian subsidiary had been doing well, compared to others. It did not occur to me that we would be downsized to save the distant parent company. Some weeks after I left, four others were retrenched, without the benefit of the "package" that I received. Over the past months, I have noticed this happening to some other multinational IT companies too.

If your employer's future looks bleak, would you be better off lending your

shoulder to the wheel, perhaps helping to save your own job, or look for a new employer?

I recommend finding a new job. For inexplicable reasons, you have more credibility when you apply while you are employed than when you are not. Once you are unemployed, the matter of redundancy is irrelevant to your prospective employer, but the state of unemployment reflects on your ability to be employed.

Outplacement

I was fortunate to be referred to an outplacement service—Morgan & Banks (M&B)—by my former employer. This is a once-off paid service for the employer but completely free and limitless for the former employee. M&B offers you a handful of relevant short courses, a personal counsellor, PCs, printers, desks, Internet access, copier, postage for your applications, and more. The courses helped me to polish my resume, recognise my strengths and weaknesses, learn job-seeking techniques, and provided me with an "office" in the city. I could reserve a cubicle, which contains a telephone and PC with word processing and Internet software, or I could have the M&B receptionist take messages for me. City parking is very expensive, so taking public transport is advisable.

Centrelink

I registered with the former Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) and Centrelink within hours of being laid off, because payments start on the day you apply. Be sure to have a list of your assets in a handy location, for you will be filling out a few forms. Keep a copy of the completed forms, in case you need to re-apply. This happens if you leave the country for any duration. Even if you warn Centrelink in advance, the Immigration Department's computer will detect your departure and you'll receive a rather triumphant-sounding, "Gotcha!" letter some weeks later, asking you to explain your absence. You have to ring Centrelink and ask them to look at your computer

**redundant,
retrenched,
laid off,
downsized—
all euphemisms**

record where you point out that you did tell them before you left, right? "Oh, yes, you are right, Sir, please disregard the notice."

It does not matter if you have to leave the country for a funeral or a job interview—the government has deemed that you cease your relationship with Centrelink when you depart. When you return, you re-apply almost from scratch. I am sure the procedure was designed to catch rorters and to create full employment for the departments, but it does not help the genuine cases. I heard about an unemployed pilot who got the occasional one-trip contract as a reliever and he had to re-apply every time he returned.

My advice is to not leave the country even if someone else is paying for the trip. The grief is not worth it and Centrelink staff have better things to do. One would think that they could merely dock your dole for the duration of your trip but that would be too easy, wouldn't it?

When you are on a Job Search Allowance, you have to keep a diary for the first six weeks and you list your search efforts. You also fill out a form once a fortnight with the same information and other information about your situation. I missed out on the Telstra share offer because I thought I wasn't supposed to be able to afford shares. I learnt later that I could have bought the shares without affecting my entitlement.

Even after completing the diary, you are strongly advised to keep details of your searches. There are two reasons for this. The first is the relatively trivial reason of being able to repeat the list of jobs you applied for in the past six weeks—occasionally you get a special form. The more important reason is that you need to keep a list of your efforts so that you can make notes about each application—did you get an interview, a second interview, any response at all, and so on.

IT jobs

I don't have a "solid" history in one industry and that is perhaps my handicap. My first seven years as an accountant are best described as a bad choice of first degree. My eight years as a RAAF officer included a significant element of computing, so I left them to get a Graduate Diploma of Computing from Deakin University and join the IT industry. Without going into my detailed career history, suffice it to say that I wanted to be a Product Manager, which is at the marketing end of the IT business. That was my last role and I was very happy there.

Many "ideal" vacancies came and went, beyond my grasp because the client had mandated a Marketing degree. This is true of many Melbourne-based IT manufacturers and their loss was my loss. Sometimes, these are elimination criteria more so than selection criteria. If I did further studies, it would be a Master of Business Administration in Marketing.

Melbourne does not have as many IT vendors as does Sydney, so we begin with a smaller selection of vacancies. There are more IT vacancies advertised in *The Australian* than *The Age*, and most of the jobs are in Sydney. Most of the (few) product manager jobs were in Sydney, so I was also applying for other roles that I had performed in my career, such as project manager and technical writer-editor.

Applying for an interstate or overseas job is a greater challenge than a local one. Not only do they have to fly you to an interview (or fly someone to interview you) but you are more expensive to re-locate than a local candidate. You would need to be really good to get such a job. Jobs in the Middle-East are relatively easy to get, but be sure to ask for a list of conditions imposed on foreign workers before wasting time applying for a position.

The elimination game

This has been the first time I have had to look for a job "seriously"; namely, the earlier ones had been very easy to get. The current theory about writing a good resume is that it should be tailored for the job; it should be four pages at the most; and it should only cover the past ten years of your career. I will mention later why this can work against you.

Too much detail in your resume gives the recruiter more opportunities to eliminate you. Hence, you should only mention your experiences that directly relate to the vacancy, even if you spent more time doing other things.

Many IT vacancies attract dozens, sometimes hundreds, of applicants, so your objective is to get into the short list. A tailored resume is a good start, but it is not enough, for you have to attract the attention of the recruiter, typically an external agency.

Understanding recruiters

Recruiters seem to come in two flavours. There is the younger type, who was probably hired as a graduate and then there is the seasoned veteran who has worked in some segment of the IT industry. I preferred the latter type, as I felt they knew the subject matter, whereas the former were likely to skim your resume for keywords and possibly fail to recognise your potential.

Recruiters work for the client, not you. Hence they will not take a risk based on your potential capacity when it is easier to pick someone else who has done the same type of work before. As an example, although I worked as a senior technical editor, supervised technical writers, and am up-to-date with the tools used in that profession, I had a near-zero interview rate when applying for technical writer positions. I topped the technical writer's course at RMIT, but as I didn't have such a job description in my resume, it simply did not matter. As I wasn't seriously trying to get back into that tax bracket, I didn't try to "tailor" my resume accordingly.

Applying technology

My initial applications were often sent by fax, until I noticed at one interview how ghastly the faxed version looked. The majority of recruiters can handle e-mailed attachments, so most of my applications were sent from the comfort of home at no cost. It was rare to send one by post.

Unfortunately, a minority of these recruiters is not computer literate enough or their e-mail gateways are antiquated. Some are still using "Word 6" (predates Office 95, which is "Word 7", while Office 97 was "Word 8"). One of them stumped me when he said I was sending a Word 8 file, not Word 6. I was using the former, but I would take the file to a "Word 7" PC and re-save it in that format. Finally, a patient recruiter at that firm agreed to humour me when I sent several messages, each configured differently.

The solution for that agency was for me to set the e-mail attachment encoding method to "uuencode" mode, not the default "MIME" mode. The mail gateway there pre-dated MIME.

The confusion arises because the formats for Word 6 and Word 7 were mutually compatible and are shown as "Word 6.0/95" in the Save As dialog box of the current version.

At the same agency, another recruiter once rang me to say that he didn't know how to open a .TXT file, so I had to send it to him in Word 6 format. I shudder when I think that these people are high-profile IT recruiters.

Most recruiters have a Web site, ranging from the atrocious to the bleeding edge; very few can be described as impressive. As has been alleged about print advertisements for some time, some of the online advertisements have been long filled. Visit some of them two months apart and see how many earlier vacancies are still displayed. When I questioned one of these agencies, they said that this is done because some clients have an ongoing need for certain positions. Yeah, right.

There are a few job-search sites in Australia and abroad that will scan new vacancies for your keywords and e-mail you the URLs of those vacancies. I haven't found one that I can recommend, unless you don't mind wading through mostly irrelevant notifications.

Most agencies use a single e-mail address for all incoming mail. This is sometimes set to send an automated response, which can be confusing to you if you are not applying for a position but are writing a follow-up message. One agency uses a single address because they have a part-timer who checks each attachment for viruses. (I hope she doesn't have to process each file manually.)

Should you have a Web site that includes your resume? That is up to you, but my experience is that you may get some curious visitors but not potential employers. Should you upload your resume to some Web site or post it to a job newsgroup? I did not try the latter but leaving it at a few resume sites resulted in not one enquiry.

The application

There is no substitute for paper applications sent in a flat, well-protected envelope. Often the journey of your envelope is beyond your control, but for some positions I hand-delivered my application to the front desk of the company. I heard that some applicants are sending resumes on a CD-ROM but every interviewer I spoke to about it was annoyed by these resumes. A CD-ROM is suitable as an optional extra tool if you are applying for a multimedia position, else it could be a liability. Few of the recruiters appear to have PCs capable of running a multimedia application.

Your resume must have a one-page covering letter and it is worth asking someone else to check every application before you send it. I made at least two such errors. In one case I sent a badly

cut-and-pasted resume that had several conflicting "objectives". That was a case of not deleting conflicting comments from my master resume. In the other example, I used a previous letter as my starting point but I forgot to edit out the name of the first company and position.

Getting shortlisted

I must have applied for hundreds of positions, which included many slightly beyond my skill set. I did not attend the M&B courses for a full year because I thought they'd be a bit of a joke and I believed I had a "good" nine-page resume. My RAAF experience included personnel staffing and interviewing, so I thought I knew it all. In hindsight, this was a serious error of judgment on my part.

My resume had simply grown over the years and it had not occurred to me that an employer isn't much interested in what I had done more than five years ago. The problem here is that only recent experience seems to count (unless you are a former COBOL programmer whose skills are needed for the Y2K crisis), so it seemed to make me a less attractive candidate for, say, an editorial role.

The tailored resume will increase your chances of being shortlisted but there is one hazard. Many agencies genuinely keep your resume for future vacancies and I suspect that some merely say that they do. If you have had a varied career like me, you are more likely to have more than one tailored master resume. So, if you sent your "project manager" resume, you may miss out on that "product manager" job that comes up at the same agency. You need to send an "updated" resume when you see the vacancy.

Cold calls

"Cold calling" did not work for me. When I was laid off, I wrote to all the major IT vendors I could think of. Most did not respond. I can relate to this, as one of my previous employers used to get job enquiries almost on a daily basis, so they rarely got past the receptionist. I knew some of the local vendor staff and I tried the direct approach. The response ranged from a complete lack of acknowledgment to a polite evasion. I even offered to work two days a week without payment (that is the limit set by Centrelink), but they did not take me up. This might work for you if you are a student.

Interviews

My interview-to-application ratio was about 1 in 10, clearly not as good as I would have liked. The advice given to interviewees by various sources is fairly identical—dress appropriately, be honest, project confidence, be well prepared, and so on.

Being prepared is getting easier, thanks to the power of the Web. A company's annual reports, product portfolio, its competitors, share price, news reports and so on are all easy to find. Do this research before sending that application and do some more before each interview.

In hindsight, I can say that the interview that lands you the job will be significantly different from the ones you failed. I had only three "second interviews", namely a follow-up interview of two or three of the short list candidates.

An interesting theory I read recently was that removing one's jacket before the interview has helped many people to win the job. Apparently, this tactic shows that you are willing to roll up your sleeves and get on with the job. I did this at my successful interview, so it certainly worked for me.



Rolling up your sleeves does not mean going to the interview in a short-sleeved shirt. The author is in the centre with a famous "sleeve-roller", Peter Norton, at right, and Past President, Honorary Life Member and PC Update production manager, Peter Smith at left.

Interviews that aren't

I read in another article that some employers invite you to an interview merely to meet a person with your background. This happens to more experienced candidates and probably not with recruitment agencies, who are too busy to play games.

I had two interviews (both being for junior positions in the State government) where the panel members "knew" me through this magazine or by other means. One panel had several copies of *PC Update* on the interview table and seemed to dwell on the time I spent on Melb PC work. I assured them that I did it in my own time. To this date I have not heard back from those interviews, in spite of written reminders, which puts their professionalism under question.

At a second interview, I was kept waiting three hours with no explanation. The receptionist told me that the interviewer was interviewing someone and could not be disturbed. I walked out of that one and I learnt later that the company hired internally after all that.

Tests

Some agencies will subject you to a battery of written tests that are designed to place you in a category. You are also interviewed but the test results are used to determine if you deserve a client interview. At an agency interview for a job at the ANZ Bank, I was scored low in verbal reasoning. This means I may not be able to understand instructions. At an earlier, day-long series of tests (conducted for a previous employer for career guidance purposes) I had ranked near the absolute top of the population norm, which is corroborated by my long association with writing and editing. I think I was a bit slow off the mark in starting the recent test and did not answer all questions. Who knows how reliable these tests are, but I suggest that an employer should not place too much reliance on their results.

If the culture fits

A phrase one often hears these days is "a culture fit". Interviewers will use this phrase to visualise you in the client's workplace. What does it mean? In my experience it means that your age must be less than that of your potential boss and of most of the team. In a US survey of IT positions, only about five percent of managers hire candidates older than themselves.

The "culture" also refers to the work practices in place. If you come from an environment that is perceived to be clock-watching, then you may not be a good fit in a workplace that needs you to work 60-hour weeks. If you come from a military background then they are likely to assume that you will bark orders and, therefore, be unlikely to "fit".

Sometimes, the client has made it clear to the recruiter that the successful candidate will be in a certain age range or sex. Just look at the faces of recent appointees in various IT magazines and judge for yourself.

As such factors are beyond your control, don't dwell on them and look at other ways to get short listed.

Networking or not working

One sometimes hears that "the majority of jobs are not advertised". While I can neither prove nor disprove this assertion, I suspect that it is a qualified statement. Some jobs are not advertised externally, such as government jobs; some are filled internally through promotion. I don't think those vacancies count if you are an outsider. Nevertheless, some jobs go to people who made it known that they were available. This is done by human networking.

If you are looking for work, you need to tell everyone who will listen. While this carries the hazard of being offered interviews for entirely inappropriate (non-IT) or junior positions, you may need to take such a job one day. Most people will assume that you have found a new position after some weeks have elapsed, so you need to remind them of your status.

Where can you network? Your work-mates at previous employers are often a good starting point. Some of them would have moved on to new employers and could put in a word for you. Our user group is another great place to establish and nourish new networks—go to some SIG meetings.

When do you begin to network? I have now learnt that I should have kept alive my old networks to a better degree, as many of my former colleagues have disappeared without a trace. The lesson learnt is that networking is a constant process and it must be nurtured even when you are not consciously looking for work. Look up that former colleague before it is too late!

Mind over matter

Most members may not know that I distanced myself entirely from all Melb PC and APCUG roles when I passed the 12-month unemployment mark. I was spending too much time on those voluntary duties, but ironically, I believe I was less productive in those tasks than in my employed days. You may have noticed fewer articles written by me in that time frame. I had to be sure that I was giving job-hunting my full attention. So must you, if you are in this predicament.

Success at last

I received a call from Michael Page Sales & Marketing (a recruitment agency). It was the only agency I had dealt with that kept following up with my progress. By contrast, some others appeared to have written me off once I had failed an earlier interview. I had been concerned that Michael Page had placed me in a "technical" pigeonhole and that I was missing out on marketing positions. I was wrong.

Sometimes, a vacancy disappears owing to a change of mind by the client and sometimes it can take a couple of months following the advertisement to reach the interview stage. This job was in the latter category. I was interviewed one day, a second interview with the CEO and an offer the same evening. I hope you too have similar luck with your next interview and a much shorter period of uncertainty.

About the author

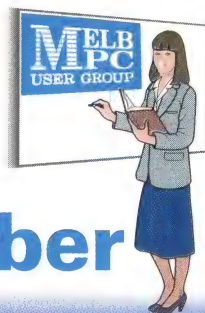
Ash Nallawalla is an honorary Life Member of this group and has held many senior positions on its Committee and this magazine. He is a product manager with a CTI and ISDN design company. □

Can Melb PC help?

Are you unemployed or looking for a better job? Would you like Melb PC to offer a venue for networking opportunities that are not presently available?

Please write to ash@melbpc.org.au with your thoughts. List your broad professional grouping.

If a significant number of people is interested in networking, the Committee can be asked for its support.



Courses: November—December

Info Box

Where are courses held?

At the group's premises, usually in the Training Room. Some courses are held in the SIG room so check when you arrive.

The address is 27 Dorcas Street (Cnr of Wells Street), South Melbourne VIC 3205

How do I get there?

There is usually plenty of parking available nearby in the evenings or at weekends or tram to corner of St. Kilda Rd and Dorcas Street and walk one block down Dorcas Street.

Important!

You will obtain greater benefit from a course if you have the skills recommended by trainers as prerequisites for their courses. Otherwise, you may not be able to keep up with the class practical sessions.

How do I book a course?

Please use the order form on page 31 or (for credit card orders only) phone or fax the office (numbers on page 3).

Early enrolment is advised as places are limited. Enrolments/bookings without payment will **not** be accepted.

I have something to say!

You can contact Training with suggestions for courses or other training-related matters by sending e-mail to Lynn Pollock at lynn@melbpc.org.au

Application courses

Introduction to Powerpoint \$45

Caroline Houston
6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Thu 19 Nov.
This course gives an introduction to the capability of the tools, using the templates and wizards, creating graphics and creating standard slides. Students will create presentations that can be given as on-screen shows or printed for use on an overhead projector. This course is a must in preparation for your next meeting/conference delivery.

Prerequisites: Familiarity with Windows 95 including mouse and keyboard skills.

Intermediate Powerpoint \$45

Caroline Houston
6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Thu 17 Dec.
This course gives a more in-depth perspective to creating presentations using enhanced graphics and special transformations from slide to slide. Students will create presentations that can be given as on-screen shows or printed for use on an overhead projector. This course is a must in preparation for your next meeting/conference delivery.

Prerequisites: Familiarity with Win 95 including mouse and keyboard skills. This course also assumes familiarity with Powerpoint in creating basic slides and basic graphics or attendance at the Introduction course.

Specialist trainers required

We require specialist Trainers in the following courses:

- Windows NT 4.0
- The basics of programming
- Visual Basic programming.

If you are interested and suitably experienced, then please contact Lynn Pollock in the first instance by e-mail at lynn@melbpc.org.au outlining your experience in the subject.

Communication courses

Introduction to the Melb PC BBS \$45

Lynn Pollock
1.00 pm–4.00 pm, Sun 22 Nov.
A basic examination of the Melb PC BBS covering initial logon, menu system, message areas, file areas and transfers, plus tips and tricks.
Prerequisites: None.
See also: File management, archiving and compression techniques.

Internet courses

Note: If you are starting with minimal knowledge, we suggest that the Internet courses are best attended in the sequence shown. More advanced students should attend at their skill level.

1. Introduction to the Internet \$45

Lynn Pollock
9.00 am–noon, Sun 22 Nov.
9.00 am–noon, Sat 12 Dec.
An overview of the Melb PC Internet service. Live explanations of all the major programs that make up the Internet. Full detailed discussion of the hardware and software items involved, including modems. General questions concerning Internet connections.
Prerequisites: None.
See also: File management, archiving and compression techniques.

2. Using the Internet with Windows 95/98 \$90

Lynn Pollock
9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sat 7 Nov.
9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 6 Dec.
This is the basic course for Windows 95 users. It suits people about to install Win 95 Internet software or novice users of the Internet who want a full explanation of the basic setup and techniques involved. Hands-on individual installation of 32-bit Internet software. Explanation, discussion and live student Internet connections to demonstrate and practice all the major components.
Prerequisites: Win 95 experience.

3. Advanced Internet Part 1: Effectively using Web browsers \$60

Lynn Pollock
1.00 pm–5.00 pm, Sat 12 Dec.
Complete examination and discussion of all the features in the latest versions of both Netscape and MS Internet Explorer. Configuring, bookmark and favourite management, saving images and data, offline viewing of saved information, effective use of search engines and techniques, and tips and tricks. Students have live Internet connections to practice their searching techniques.
Prerequisites: Students should have attended the basic Internet course or have a good understanding of Internet principles. This is an advanced course.

Courses by request

These courses are available by request subject to minimum student numbers. Please register your interest with the office.

- QuickBooks
- Office 97 overview
- Communications workshop
- Housekeeping a computer

- Memory management
- Virus protection and recovery
- Overview of Windows 95
- Writing batch files
- Using the Internet with Windows 3.x
- Computer Basics.

4. Advanced Internet Part 2: Internet Workshop

\$90

Lynn Pollock
9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 13 Dec.
Complete discussion and live student Internet connections examining all the features that make up the Internet today, with the exception of Web browsers. Students will gain experience with the following: Advanced e-mail, FTP, Archie, Gopher, Finger, Telnet, IRC Network, Internet Phone, newsgroups and list servers, also connection problems and tips and tricks.

Prerequisites: Students should have attended the basic Internet course or have a good understanding of Internet principles. This is an advanced course.

Web Page Design

\$162

Steven Goldate
6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 11, 18, 25 Nov.
This course has replaced the Beginners' and Advanced HTML courses. Students will learn how to write web pages for the World Wide Web. This includes HTML (Hypertext Markup Language) basics, use of HTML editors, both text and wysiwyg. Students will gradually be introduced into the inner workings of HTML, learning how to write simple Web pages, then progress

to more complex features such as using tables, frames, embedding sound files, incorporating public domain JAVA applets, how to create online slide shows and more. The course will cover such issues as features of good Web-page design, FTP uploading issues and getting free stuff off the Net. Students will also learn about and will look at directory structures in HTML and file uploading with FTP.

Prerequisites: Preferably, students should be familiar with the Internet, using a Web Browser, have some basic word editing skills and be familiar with Windows.

Operating system and hardware courses

How to buy a computer

Free

Tom Coleman
6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Tue 10 Nov.
6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Tue 1 Dec.
What a computer does, what the jargon means, buying advice, tips and traps, no sales talk!

Prerequisites: None.

Hardware upgrade and repairs

\$90

Tom Coleman
10.00 am–5.00 pm, Sat 14 Nov.
Students will be able to dismantle and

re-assemble a computer, replace major components. Be aware of the basic "rules" and conventions of computer building. Know enough to get started on simple jobs.

Prerequisites: Familiarity with the basic functions of each of a computer's parts.

Introduction to UNIX

\$45

Len Krois
6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Fri 13 Nov.
UNIX/LINUX basics for people who want a basic feel for the open systems environment. UNIX is a popular shareware version of UNIX that will run on IBM-compatible PCs. The session includes logging onto a UNIX system, finding your way around, manipulating files, viewing and editing text files, using the on-line text manual.

Prerequisites: Command line computing knowledge preferred.

Upgrade to Windows 95

\$119

Mary Levens
9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 15 Nov.
An understanding of the new features of Win 95, and how they differ from Windows 3.1. Using "Shortcuts". Customising Win 95. A comprehensive exercise manual is included.

Prerequisites: Familiarity with

Windows 3.1x, including operation of Program Manager, Control Panel and File Manager.

Starting Windows 95

\$119

Mary Levens
9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 1 Nov.
6.30 pm–9.30 pm, Wed 9, 16 Dec.
Introduces the computer novice to the concepts and skills required for effective use of the Win 95 environment. Covers basic Windows jargon and terminology, how to accomplish everyday tasks and how to change the way Windows looks and works. Students will receive a comprehensive exercise manual.
Prerequisites: None.

Advanced Windows 95/98

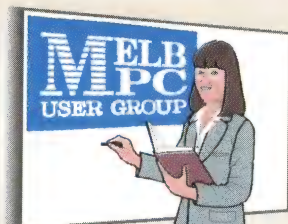
\$90

Lynn Pollock
9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sun 8 Nov.
9.00 am–4.00 pm, Sat 5 Dec.
A full and detailed examination of Windows 95 for experienced users. Topics include adding hardware, registry control and editing, backup techniques, communications, networking with Win 95, conflict resolution, enhancing performance, system maintenance, and many tips and tricks.
Prerequisites: Must be familiar with Win 95. □

Need a Training Venue?

Conduct your classes in the Melbourne PC User Group Training Centre. Regular or casual rental.

Facilities include:
12 Pentiums
Network server
Printer
Digital projection
Overhead projection
Comfortable surroundings



For further
information contact:

Melbourne
PC User Group
Administration Office
27 Dorcas Street
South Melbourne
VIC 3205
Ph: (03) 9699 6222
Fax: (03) 9699 6499

The Chat Room: Chris Livingstone

The Macquarie Dictionary defines "clarion" in six ways. One definition is "inspiring; rousing", another is "a rousing call".

Chris Livingstone is a Melb PC member who wants to inspire greater interest in an advanced programming language called Clarion, and he is working with others to arouse the curiosity of as many computer users as possible. He believes that Clarion offers both novice and advanced computer enthusiasts a magnificent array of possibilities, solutions and applications.

The software is certainly an advanced programming language, however it is more than that. Clarion is a whole computing environment. Chris stated that it is used for a broad variety of purposes including process control, farming, databases—from small scale to tens of millions of records, as well as connections to large databases on mainframe computers—touch screen interfaces and point of sale solutions.

He told me confidently: "It is a topnotch product." It would be very

helpful if the community of Clarion users in Australia was much larger and provided more support and communication for individual exponents. The product is about a decade old and through its merit deserves to be more widely known, and taken into consideration when people investigate software purchases, according to him.

Chris is the Convener of the Clarion Special Interest Group. Each monthly meeting of the SIG has a topic or presentation as well as opportunities for conversation and problem-solving. The group benefits from very good presentations, and attendance at the monthly meetings continues to grow.

Chris and some of the other members of the Clarion SIG have organised a Regional Clarion Conference on the first weekend in November. The conference will provide an opportunity for delegates to gather and exchange information. The organisers chose Ballarat as the venue for a number of reasons. Firstly, it provides respite from travel to metropolitan centres for Clarion users in the country. Secondly, the location will ensure that the event is residential in nature and thus increase the opportunities for interaction and informal conversation between attendees. Thirdly, Ballarat is an attractive destination for computer users travelling from South Australia and other interstate locations. About 40 people are expected to attend the interesting program of speakers and sessions.

Chris began writing computer programs nearly thirty years ago. His first language was Fortran. Programming is very creative, in his opinion, and that creativity provides him with much satisfaction. He has written many programs since that first Fortran adventure. Chris has used a number of languages and is always looking for tools that make the process of constructing programs more efficient.

He has a strong interest in training new and current computer users. Often application software is installed with default settings that are supposed to suit every user. Chris does a lot of voluntary work, helping people get established with computers. He enjoys setting up a computer to suit the needs of a particular user.

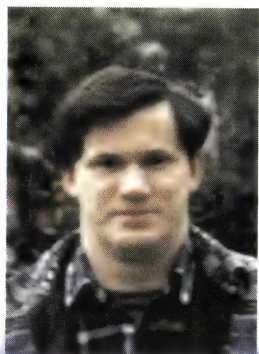
He has developed a great deal of knowledge in the field of word processing. Frequently people using word processing tools treat such packages like an electronic typewriter, ignoring many powerful features. Within an hour of beginning training in word processing he believes most participants will learn something of value.

Chris was born in the United Kingdom and came to Australia when he was a child. He studied science at university and then began a career in teaching. After 17 years in secondary schools he worked in the computer industry for five years. Later he became a trainer at TAFE colleges. He began to concentrate on his own projects in 1995.

Apart from computing, his hobbies include listening to classical music and regularly attending concerts of the Melbourne Symphony. His tastes extend to Opera and singing in general. He enjoys travel, particularly discovering small country towns, and gaining satisfaction from conducting research on the sights and history of Australian communities. For many years Chris has been interested in photography, the fruits of his labours are included in the collection of rural scenes that line the walls of his home.

His favourite city is Melbourne because it has a style that is not too brash and contains many wide tree-lined streets. He particularly enjoys Southbank and Lygon Street. In his opinion Victoria provides an excellent choice of landscapes including mountains, forests, deserts and the ocean.





Chris recommends that novice Clarion users seek training and help to have an easier start with the program. He also says it is important to obtain information from more than one source and to select a good supplier. Consistent support from the supplier is a necessity and the cheapest option is not necessarily the best. Be sure that follow-up support is available for both the small and large problems that will occur. Remember that not everything in computing is easy, there will be frustration along the way.

Chris says Clarion is a progressive package and in the last twelve months Clarion has moved to an object-orientated programming approach. This development makes it a more powerful language and it is now available for the Windows environment. He is aware of alternative offerings, however he considers Clarion to be a very versatile product that suits a wide variety of needs. It is more than a language, within it there are tools to generate programs and the end user can add her or his own components that will be incorporated into the system.

He speaks quite emphatically about the value of the system and conveys his message about this software convincingly. He believes that many more computer users should consider Clarion and that they will discover the availability of a large number of possibilities and solutions when they do. If you would like to learn more about Clarion send e-mail to Chris at chrisliv@ozemail.com.au

Your suggestions for interviewees are always welcome. Please send details of those people you wish to read about to neilplue@virtual.net.au.

Interact + PC IT



Previously two exhibitions, Interact and PC IT have combined in 1998 to form one, larger event, with the less-than-original name of "Interact + PC IT", held from 28 to 31 October at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre ("Jeff's Shed").

Floor space of 15,000 square metres will serve over 250 exhibitors, grouped into thematic areas such as Software, CADWorld, Communications and Networking, Accounting, Internet, Multimedia and IT Recruitment and Training

There are free seminars, the main themes being

- Electronic Commerce
- Internet
- Multimedia
- IT solutions for SMEs
- Networking

Opening times:

Wed 28 Oct	11 am - 7 pm
Thu 29 Oct	10 am - 9 pm
Fri 30 Oct	10 am - 7 pm
Sat 31 Oct	10 am - 5 pm.

"ONE FOR ONE" DEAL

This is how it works:

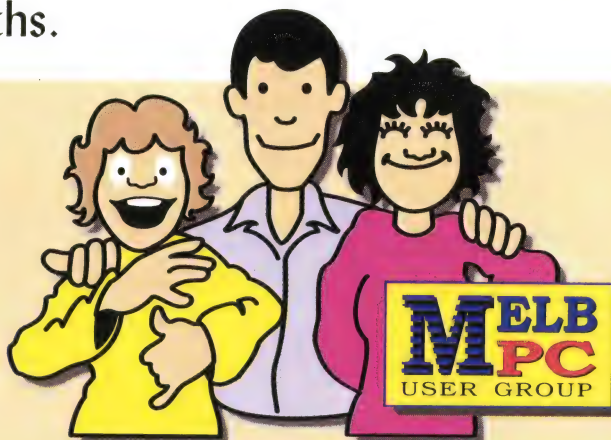
Find a friend.

Get a Melb PC membership form.

Get friend to fill out form, showing your membership number as the referring member.

Send form with payment.

Your membership is extended by one month for every new individual member you introduce, up to a maximum of 12 months.



Technology and social change: The effects on family and community

(Delivered 19 June 1998, to the COSSA Congressional Seminar.)

This research was sponsored by the Howard Silver Consortium of Social Science Associations (COSSA) <http://members.aol.com/socscience/COSSAindex.htm> with generous support from the Ford Foundation. It is re-published with its, and the author's permission.

Introduction

My section of this seminar, the effects of technology on family and community, can only be understood in the details of daily life. Technology is binding the world of work and the world of home in ways that re-define what it means to be in each. Some changes are dramatic, others are subtle, but the changes are experienced in the mundane activities of everyday life. To begin this presentation I will tell you a story. This story may not reflect your own lives, but I imagine some details will have a familiar ring to them.

John is a middle-aged product development manager at a high tech company in Silicon Valley. He bemoans the fact that he no longer has the kind of personnel support he had even ten years ago. While he shares an administrative assistant with several other managers, he is now expected to handle his own communications, create his own presentations and manage his own time and financial budget. After all, he now has a PC to improve his productivity, and interactive online calendars to manage his time. The nature of his work means that he is in constant contact with engineers, the general managers above him, and his counterparts in different sites in his international company. He has more contact, and more in common, with his counterpart in Taiwan than the person in the next cubicle. He tries very hard not to take too much work home with him, preferring to work late on site, but the international nature of his work means he is on the phone at midnight and at dawn. He is grateful

for e-mail and voice mail since they can fit his schedule. Realistically, he thinks about work problems constantly, in his garden, and in his car. He talks about his work all the time with his wife and volunteers to install network servers at his daughter's school on Net Day.

Meanwhile, his administrative assistant, Sharon, complains that her work load is overwhelming, even to the point where she is expected to move furniture and take out trash. She is expected to learn new programs and upgrades on her own time. Both John and Sharon now take work and worry home. Sharon checks her e-mail and voice mail in the pre-dawn hours before her children wake to prepare for any tasks that may need to be addressed immediately. She carries a pager and a cell phone so that she can stay in contact with her teenage children after they come home from school. All of them feel much safer for the presence of these devices. They can now stay out longer and be more independent since they are "in contact". The only time they have been physically together in several weeks is for the anthropologist's visit to their home for an interview.

This vignette is drawn from a host of interviews and observations done over the past seven years in a series of studies dubbed "the Silicon Valley Cultures Project". I have been part of a team of anthropologists, along with Charles Darrah and James M Freeman, who have been studying technology and community in Silicon Valley. Our particular emphasis has been on the study of technology in daily life. We have treated Silicon Valley as a laboratory for technological saturation, where talk about technology surfaces easily at work, at home and in the community and therefore can be captured by eager social scientists. Silicon Valley is also a place with a well defined regional identity, in which discussions of re-inventing community are common fare. We have sampled the

intersection of technology and community in a variety of ways. In 1995 we worked with the Institute for the Future, which combined a large scale statistical survey with an intensive ethnographic study of "infomated households". These are households with a critical mass of at least five information devices, including some combination of VCRs, CDs, laser discs, fax machines, answering machines, voice mail services, computers, and cellular phones. How did these devices enter and flow through peoples lives? What impact did they have? This study highlighted an unexpected connection. Infomated households revolved around work, both paid work and an endless series of tasks that formed a greater environment of work ranging from gainful work to voluntary activities and "working on one's family". This project led to 450 detailed interviews with people on work/home/community interface in Silicon Valley, soon to be partially funded by the National Science Foundation. We entered a variety of work spaces, at "work" and at home to view how people managed the intersection between these domains. Meanwhile, we also conducted related studies, collected hundreds of stories on how people decided to purchase devices and how they managed interactions across different cultures and generations. We also interviewed more than 50 community leaders about their visions of the future of community in the Silicon Valley region. Finally, using this research as a base, we are about to launch an intensive observation-based study of families and work in Silicon Valley sponsored by the Alfred P Sloan Foundation, investigating even more deeply the issues highlighted here today.

Please note that I am not separating information technologies from the institutions that act as conduits for the entrance of those devices into the home. Technology is not context free. Devices brought home from work organisations and schools are accompanied by styles

of use and assumed purposes that follow that fax or that Mac into the household. As the boundaries and distinctions blur, we abandoned the idea of sharply separating the domains but instead we traced the flow of technology through peoples lives. It is in the context of this research that I comment on family, community and technology.

Technology and Family

As mentioned earlier, one of the most strikingly obvious impacts of information technology is the shift in the work-home relationship. We encountered people that said they never took work home, yet the computer had its own room and engineering magazines littered every flat surface. We had to question our assumption that we knew what "work" was. Work was not a single coherent entity, but a collection of different things. People talked of their "work"—ongoing career preparation, finances, parenting. But they distinguished that from their "work-work", that is, paid work for a particular organisation. A large proportion of supposedly free time was spent thinking about "work-work" while in the shower, eating, or driving. As is discussed elsewhere in this seminar, information technologies have been instrumental in re-defining the scope of work.

We asked people what made them a family? Repeatedly the answer was "we do things together". To these interviewees, the family is not a natural unit that simply exists, but one defined by action. Families watch TV, camp, travel, eat and talk together. The device that facilitate that action or talk—phones, networked computers, pagers, answering machines—take on a serious purpose for these people. Paging your children to let them know you are concerned that they arrived home safely from school demonstrates parental responsibility. Sharing an evening of movies or technology talk provides an opportunity for doing something together.

The interactions between information saturated work and networked families are governed by complex rules. As one interviewee noted:

At the time, there was a lot of hard copy paperwork at my job. I thought it would be real convenient to have a fax modem...I also hoped that the computer would save me time, and get me ahead at work. I mean, I don't work at home because it is so great. I would rather do other things. But I saw, or hoped, that working at

home would allow me to get even more done and give me an advantage at work. And then I thought that if I need an occasional afternoon off, it would be okay because I would be ahead. Of course, that was naive. Everybody works at home and now it is a standard. Working at home doesn't let me get ahead, it stops me from falling behind.

The colonisation of home time by work is only the most obvious impact. As we talked to people at work and home we discovered that only certain kinds of work come home. Because the information saturated work environment is infinitely interruptible, activities that require concentration—especially writing, reading and reflecting—get shipped home where it is vainly hoped that uninterrupted time can be cultivated. People respond to this relocation in a variety of ways. Some have clearly scheduled "Mommy is working now" times. Others try to manage post-bedtime shifts. Many resist, by trying to create boundaries and manipulating the technologies. The interactions can be subtle. For example, a highly placed city official tries to separate work and home by creating a barrier of physical distance, a common strategy. She commutes several hours a day to be able to maintain an affordable, distinct home life. During that commute she uses her cell phone to begin and end her management day. Her action has led to a "voice mail organisation" at city hall in which e-mail contact is reduced. While this is convenient for her, it limits the telecommuting strategies other people in the organisation might have used to manage their work-home juggling. Her family driven choices ripple through the organisation and back into her colleagues' family lives.

The penetration of work uses of information technology into the home leads to an access dilemma. "I want instant access to you but I want to minimise your access to me." This strategy increasingly leads to the use of home as an environment in which interruptions can be carefully managed, even between family members. Note the tone in this comment, "I get stressed when David doesn't have his (cell) phone on. You know, we have them for a reason, and I'll be trying to call him and I find out that he has the damn thing turned off". Often even non-use of devices is carefully managed—by turning off the phone, avoiding using cell phones in the car, or checking for e-mail or voice

mail at only certain hours.

Changes in work relations and management styles have also altered the way families talk about themselves. Families increasingly view themselves as management problems to be solved, just as they would be at work, with technology.

Pagers, cell phones and answering machines, and now palm pilots, are used in tandem to co-ordinate complex household schedules. Work, school and recreational activities demand transportation, sequencing and division of labour. One software engineer, turned at-home mom, remarked that she was now prepared to go into project management after a few years of managing two small children and an occasionally telecommuting spouse. She had each day carefully orchestrated. She had her days at the co-operative day care center in which she co-ordinated the daily treats and food lessons with diverse other mothers using databases of recipes. Armed with databases of parenting articles, she acted as informal expert among her peers. Christena Nippert-Eng noted in her book on *Home and Work*, that people used their calendars as a way of marking the home/work domains. My interviewees now talk of using their upgraded palm pilots to fully integrate home/work divisions of labour—beaming their spousal schedules to each other. The perceived safety net of technology also allows planning to become ever more "just-in-time". Message machines and pagers allow plans to be created, shifted and co-ordinated in the space of a single afternoon.

The families we studied use information technologies to "work" on themselves. They use the telecommunications devices to co-ordinate activities ranging from after-school baseball to weddings. They create networks of connectedness by making and sending videotapes and e-mailing distant relatives. Family histories are recorded and distributed. Cell phones and pagers create a sense of street safety, although realistically most of our interviewees actually used them more often for traffic management than emergency pleas for help. One woman used the LCD information on her husband's pager to discover an infidelity that led to a sudden re-structuring of the family. These uses are not trivial, but ones that shape people's social reality.

Information technologies simultaneously perpetuate and alter family roles. Not too surprisingly some gender stereotypes were invoked as family members

adopted "expert roles" within the households we studied. "Techno-experts", often associated with high technology work, were most often 30-49-year-old men who could talk about technology with great facility. In contrast, their spouses, who often deemed themselves inexperienced, were interested in using, not discussing, the technology. Note the following exchange:

It's always the same pattern. Colleen would ask me a question, "How do I do something?"...Something that is really difficult for someone who really understands computers to talk about without giving some background...But she goes into the mode. "Just tell me what I need to know to get through this in the next ten minutes." (Colleen responds) "I'll say just tell me what to do." Then he says, (she lowers her voice) "Well, you have to understand blah, blah, blah." As another woman put it, "It is a man thing. Women just let men do it." However, in that supposedly "inexpert" role these people, mostly women, do manage to interconnect various telecommunications devices into a network of practical connectivity.

People also use technology to subvert old roles. One septuagenarian viewed her skill with multiple programs and Internet environments as a sign that she was "empowered" and distinct from more Luddite-age mates. Another aging mother found her role as family centre being eroded by her children's constant e-mail contact. She was now superfluous as the siblings talked directly to each other and not through her. With information devices distant kin can interact more often than immediate family. Parental and gender roles can be both controlled and challenged using the devices. Rules are created to control family roles: "You must wear your pager", "You must carry your cell phone", "You must not use the computer during dinner." These rules are subject to resistance. Exploring the nature of that defiance would reveal much about the workings of family and technology.

Technology and community

The high technology industry has also added a global dimension to the workings of community. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the Central Californian economy revolved around fruit orchards, worked by an immigrant population that hailed from Portugal, Italy, Japan, China and

Western Europe. Contemporary Silicon Valley high tech employs a culturally diverse work force. For example at Sun Microsystems a single 35-person work team might comprise engineers from Bangladesh, Canada, China, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam and the United States. This region has a complex pattern of immigration, spanning the last century, made more intricate by the influx of "new immigrants", largely Asian, educated and functionally transnational. This makes any discussion of technology and family, or technology and community more complex. People from around the world are bringing different ideas of what constitutes family, work, and community. Devices do different things to different types of families. In our ethnographic study of Infomated household the same devices might have strikingly different impacts in different types of families. Common use of VCRs, karaoke systems and telecommunications devices pulled together already close Vietnamese families while allowing other kinds of families to fly farther and farther apart. In one Hispanic family each new information technology was placed in a carefully orchestrated system of devices that encouraged tightly-knit extended family and community interactions. The same devices—camcorders, computers, home entertainment systems—fragmented other families into smaller and smaller interest groups. In one Chinese family, an adult son was brought into parental orbit in order to teach his mother new computer skills. In another family, those same computer skills might place the adult child firmly in a corporate world beyond the reach of family as his life is consumed by work. The role of culturally generated family obligations and expectations on differential device uses begs to be researched.

Just as technology has changed the way people talk about family issues, technology saturation has also influenced the way Silicon Valley folk talk about their community. Joint Venture Silicon Valley, a community partnership between government and business responded to the early 90's recession by proposing that the region boldly "reinvent" itself. Using the language of engineering, entrepreneurship and design, community issues—such as housing, transportation, education and recreation—are re-cast as "value-added" factors to be used to recruit new businesses and workers. These instrumental features can be improved, preferably by

adding more technology.

One of the most striking examples of this perspective came from the Smart Valley Initiative within Joint Ventures. Smart Valley is an organisation that began during the economic downturn of 1992, implementing, in the words of a Smart Valley Board member, "a high-speed, fully capable, broad band infrastructure—so every home, every office will have access to high speed communications". Another engineer member added "that the industry that was responsible for creating this technology felt they had a responsibility to get our local society to use it more effectively". This group has transformed marketing into a mission, using the language of a social movement. Articulating the mission an interviewee said:

We want to facilitate the construction of a pervasive, high speed communications system and information services that will benefit all sectors of the community—education, health care, local government, business and the home. The infrastructure we implement will help transform the way we work, live and learn. Smart Valley formally dissolved this year after having accomplished their major goals. These included supporting several initiatives promoting community use of technology.

For example, the Smart Valley Telecommuting Project sought to enhance the capacity of companies to support their employees who work at least partially in their homes. Their rationale was simple:

With Silicon Valley businesses seeking innovative ways to maintain their competitive edge, recruit and retain key individuals and enhance the quality of life for all their employees, solutions such as telecommuting takes on a much greater role than that of a "nice concept". The Smart Valley Telecommuting initiative is moving telecommuting from this "concept" to a recognised business strategy that provides benefits to Valley businesses, their employees, and to the region as a whole.

Another initiative, the Smart Valley Schools Internet project, created a series of Net Days in which volunteer expertise was coupled with corporate donations to link K-12 schools to the Internet, thereby enhancing what was widely considered by interviewees to be a pitiful state in education. In their own words, the networking of schools

would "integrate technology as a tool to enhance the learning process and in the process teach students to live and work productively with technology. The efficient utilisation of information technology will help our schools and students achieve world-class education standards". These approaches have in common a particular assumption, that technology will solve problems in such a way that both the industry and community can benefit.

Silicon Valley is reviving an old notion, re-inventing the company town. The classic portraits of a company town describe a single company, maybe a mining or logging company, often geographically isolated, that owns the land, housing, service facilities, and public utilities and dominates the business life of the community even though other private enterprises may exist. Company towns are administered communities, not exclusively representative of the residents' interests, but the company's need to succeed in a given industry. Joint Venture Silicon Valley has successfully redefined the concept of a company town. Using lobbying, government partnerships and "innovative initiatives", companies have reached out to re-design the governance, schools, utilities and even health care facilities of the community to make it "a better place for business".

Assumptions re-visited

In the process of doing these projects we often stumbled over assumptions we discovered to be misleading. These premises often go unquestioned, because they reflect the everyday way we think about technology and family, but they keep us from gaining important insights into the interplay of technology, family and community.

First, we discovered that people don't just own or use individual devices, but ecosystems of technologies at home. Faxes, cell phones, telephone answering systems and computers are used together to serve the goals of individuals and families. Second, family use of technology is not trivial, but underpins important cultural work done by families. Families frame playing computer games as gaining "computer literacy" and providing a common activity for "being a family". Third, contrary to prevailing mythology, especially common in Silicon Valley, families and communities are not transformed into wholly new beings by technologies. Instead the

technologies allow families to put old behaviors and relations into new contexts. The old family game of control and resistance to control is being played out on e-mail, but the game remains. Fourth, technology does not just play an economic role in defining families and communities, but also a metaphorical, symbolic one. As information technology allows households and communities to become places of production, it also changes the way such social institutions think of themselves. Families and communities, like upgraded software can be "refreshed" or "reinvented". Families can then become a kind of product. Finally, the pivotal assumption that work is done at a workplace and family life is lived at home is much too simplistic. Many forces, not the least of which is the technical ability to work from home, have blurred the domains. If time at the workplace does not really reflect the time spent working, how does that affect family leaves or the length of a work week?

The forces that shape community and family include many factors, not just information technologies. Yet we need to know how the many devices entering peoples' lives are actually used by real people. They are creating culture as they make decisions about what constitutes work, family and community. I am part of the culture, as you may well

be. You have been given a handout, an inventory of digital devices that we use when making observations about household technology. Feel free to take the inventory home and consider how you use the technologies. What roles do these devices play in your own life? How do they sustain or change your relationships? How will the sum of these small impacts change the way we live? It is not homework, you need not return the inventory to me, but use it as our interviewees do, to reflect on the changes we rarely question.

About the author

Dr J A English-Lueck received a PhD in Anthropology from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1985 and is now an Associate Professor in the Anthropology Department at San Jose State University. Dr English-Lueck has done research on culture change in Suriname, the Peoples Republic of China and Hong Kong, and the United States. She is the author of *Health in the New Age: A Study in California Holistic Practices*, an analysis of belief and practice in the holistic health movement, and *Chinese Intellectuals on the World Frontier, an ethnographic study of scientists and engineers in China*. She is currently doing anthropological research on work, family and technology among the diverse national and corporate cultures of California's Silicon Valley. □



Members' Letters



Dodo

» David Diamond

A new project has been launched to unite unwanted and outdated computers with needy families and organisations. Please forward this to anyone who may be interested. We are just starting up and we are looking to add organisations to our donations directory.

The Dodo Project

The goal of this program is to utilise outdated computer hardware to help small charities and disadvantaged individuals. Many groups in our community are being left behind by the new wave of information technology, but donations of computers or technical skills can help others to learn and provide a vital step towards computer literacy.

Whether you have something to donate or are in need of such donations we would like to hear from you. Not only do we collect and forward equipment to organisations on our list, but we maintain a web site to allow donors to contact recipients directly.

<http://www.burnet.edu.au/dodo>
<http://www.burnet.edu.au/dodo.pdf>

The story of Jessica

Jessica is 17 years old. Her disability confines her to a wheelchair, but in no way renders her intellectually disabled. Her freedom to continue studying has become severely restricted because of limited access to computer facilities and the financial obstacles associated with living with a disability.

Through the donate-a-dodo program she received an IBM 386-compatible computer and a dot-matrix printer. She has learnt to use a word processor to compose and submit her written homework. While her challenge is still an arduous one, it is now possible for her to show the world the evidence of her active and expressive mind.

How you can help

Please help by forwarding this information to as many people as you can, in the hope that somewhere a person

who needs a computer will find us. We are also looking for any organisations or companies that may be planning to dispose of their old computers.

How to find Dodo

The dodo program is run on a volunteer basis by staff and friends at the McFarlane Burnet Centre for Medical Research.

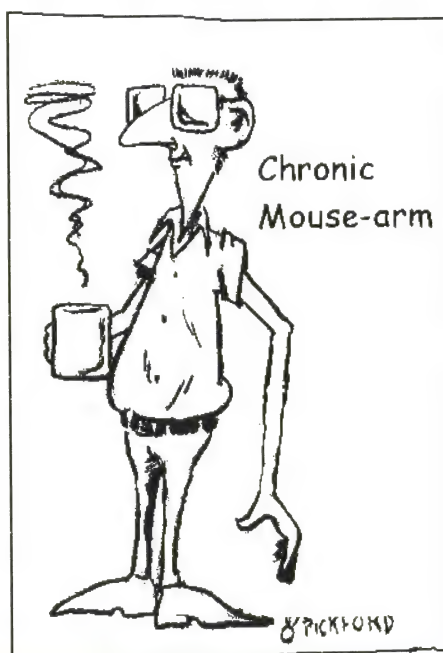
<http://www.burnet.edu.au/dodo>
e-mail: dodo@burnet.edu.au
Phone: 9282 2149
Fax: 9282 2237

For additional information, contact David Diamond
ddiamond@melbpc.org.au

BBS

» Ron Rickard

I was saddened to read in *PC Update*, that use of the Melbourne PC BBS has fallen off in recent times. Perhaps this is a sign of the times with Internet access so readily available. While I have not been a heavy user of the BBS recently, I remember how useful and exciting it was when I bought my first PC (1994). The BBS provided a ready source of files, help and interest.



While we have moved on and access to information via the Internet has become far easier over the years, I still value the help and assistance I received while I was "gaining my stripes".

Can I thank the present and past operators of Melbourne PC BBS for their dedication over the years. It has been very much appreciated by this member.

Yet more history

» Bruce Howell

Saw the piece in the October issue of *PC Update* regarding Ash's past and was reminded of this item I spotted in the Letters To The Editor section of *Micro-80* magazine for August 1981.

Thought that it might give some of the newbies heart!

***** INPUT/OUTPUT *****

From: George Skarbek

I have encountered a problem associated with the CLEAR command and string manipulation. I have enclosed a sample program which will exhibit unexpected delays. Even the command PRINT FRE("X") takes a lot of time and I am curious as to why. If you can give me an explanation, I would be very grateful.

=====

To conserve space, we have not reproduced the program sent in. It uses a CLEAR statement and involves the manipulation of a considerable number of String variables.

Your program has fallen victim to the "garbage collection" routine in Microsoft BASIC interpreter. Garbage collection occurs when the string space you CLEARED, fills up, at least when the interpreter first looks at it.

During the execution of a program, the data associated with most string variables is stored in the String Space allocated by the CLEAR statement. Every time you change the value of a string variable, another set of data is stored in the string space and the first set (i.e. its old value) is abandoned but still occupies space...

Random access

John Swale



Answers received

A From: Peter Huttemeier. Regarding the question in September *PC Update* re Lotus Suite spell checker. I have not had a similar problem, but offer the suggestion that the member check the location of the user dictionary in each of the applications, i.e. WordPro, 1-2-3, Approach etc. It should be c:\lotus\compnent\spell. This can be accessed through File|User Setup|Preferences from each of the applications.

A From: Gerard Kennedy. The dictionary file in Lotus Suite spell checker is write protected on WordPro start up to stop multiple writes to the same dictionary file by multiple copies of WordPro that may be running. If WordPro crashes, the dictionary file is not reset and therefore becomes read only, thus preventing the user from updating it. The file is LTSUSER1.UDC, and is in the path x:\lotus\compnent\spell, where x is the drive you installed to. Go to Explorer, select the file, select properties and remove the read-only attribute. This should fix the problem. One suggestion may be to upgrade to Smartsuite 98 Millenium edition.

A From: Gerard Kennedy. There is no known way to recover an Ami Pro file with a password. Opening it in WordPro will not help, although opening a WordPro file in Ami Pro will ignore the password! My suggestion would be to try to open the file in different versions, other programs such as Microsoft Word, since he may find a filter in one of these programs that ignores the password in the file header. Worst case scenario would be to use a disk editor like Norton, to look at the file, and recover any plain text that may exist.

I had a problem installing the CD-ROMS that are attached to magazines you buy. I found that my CD was a two-speed reader and using a more recent model solved the problem.

I had problems sending e-mail attachments and tried all sorts of remedies. I finally changed the modem speed down to 14,400 bps and fixed the problem.

Questions and answers

Q How fast is the HP 5100 scanner for A4-size photographs.

A It is a good scanner but speed is only one of the factors to consider and the least important unless you are scanning professionally. The ease of use and software supplied should also be considered. Scanners were reviewed a few months ago in one of the local commercial PC magazines. [JS: *PC Magazine Australia* September 1998 includes the HP 5100 review.] Remember that scanning an A4 photograph at 300 dpi will produce an image of around 25 MB.

Q At a recent swap meet I purchased the F-PROT anti-virus program produced in Iceland. Can anyone tell me how good it is?

A One member has been using it for a few years and considers it good. It is very difficult to say which is the best anti-virus program. The main thing you should look for is regular updates.

Q After installing PowerToys in Windows 98 I get the following message: "RUN.DLL C:\windows\system\shell\target.dll missing entry CD Play notify". I have installed PowerToys a number of times and this has not cured the problem. Does anyone have a solution?

A You must install PowerToys in a directory which has a name no greater than 8 characters, i.e. no long filenames are permitted.

Q Can you get Explorer to sort filenames by type as a default when it opens?

A No, but you can install Internet Explorer 4. [JS In Windows 95 I can get the sorting by type by opening Explorer, clicking on the type column header to sort by type, then immediately closing Explorer while holding the Ctl key. Next time you open Explorer, the files will be sorted by type. A number of Windows programs can have their default changed but only if you do not do anything in the program other than do the change and save using the Ctl key.]

Q My new keyboard is not very old but the lettering on the keys is disappearing. My old keyboard is still very good after seven years.

A The best ones, like IBM and Honeywell, have the letter injection moulded through the key so if it wears the lettering is still visible. One alternative is to buy cheap ones at a swap meet for around \$10. You can of course buy one per year for ten years, for the price of one of the better ones.

Unanswered questions

Q I took advantage of the First Aid and Uninstaller offer and applied the 98 update. When I go to shutdown Windows 95 there is a pause and a temporary freeze. Then I have to give it a kick-start and do it again. Has anyone had this problem since installing those products?

Q I have had a problem since installing the same programs. When I go to delete files in Uninstaller I cannot select multiple files. The Help Desk suggested using Ctl or Alt with Enter but this does not work. I managed to get it to work one time but not since.

Q From Roger Giles: I am using Windows NT 4.0 (+service Pack 3) on a P6-200 computer which is taking nearly 3 minutes to boot. Most of this time is taken up showing a blue screen (no error messages) for about one and a half minutes without any disk activity. What is going on during this time and is there any way to reduce it? □

Over to You

Please contact me if you have any comments on the answers given; can provide a reply for the unanswered questions; or if you cannot attend the monthly meeting and would like a question asked and included in this column.

To contact me: write to me care of the office; leave a message on the BBS or telephone me on (03) 9857 5567 AH or e-mail me at jswale@melbpc.org.au

Note: Please contact commercial distributors before asking a question here. In all cases mention version numbers.

Peter's *PC Update* Puzzles

These puzzles can be solved without using a computer—if one birdbrain can write them, another can solve them!

Wandering words

This puzzle contains a quotation by a nineteenth century British detective. All the letters of the quote appear in the clues in the bottom lines, each letter belongs in the column under which it appears. To make it more difficult, I've removed all the spaces and punctuation!

Hints

There are 22 words—one of them consists of just one letter; there are three ten-letter words, one eight-letter word and two with seven letters.

Colour Blind

Professor Blank, who lives in Lilydale, is known for his absentmindedness. Last week he mailed five letters, mostly relating to his latest textbook. However he managed to enclose the wrong item with every letter. Can you work out who does what, and what they received.

1. The photos should have gone to the publisher.
2. Mr White doesn't live in Blackburn, however his suburb is alphabetically lower than that of the letter sent to Mr Green.
3. The cheque went to the photographer, instead of Mr Black of Eltham, who didn't receive the birthday card intended for the professor's friend Gray.
4. One of the items was delivered by Prof. Blank's local Post Office.
5. The manuscript corrections were sent to Grensborough, but neither the printer nor

the publisher received them.

6. Brown, who doesn't own the advertising agency in Ringwood, received the invoice.

Four of everything

Each of the digits 1 – 9 occurs four times in the central part of the grid. The clues mention every time that a digit appears more than once in a column or row. No digit appears next to itself, horizontally or vertically. The numbers to the right and bottom of the grid are the sum of the cells to the left or above.

Across

- A. A pair of 8s.
B. No 6s.
C. A pair of 9s.
D. A pair of 4s, a pair of 9s.
E. A pair of 3s.
F. A pair of 7s.

Four of Everything

	a	b	c	d	e	f	
A							30
B							
C					1		33
D							39
E							18
F							33
	33	29	29	30		29	

Down

- No 3s, no 5s.
- A pair of 6s, no 5s, no 7s.
- A pair of 3s, no 4s, one 1.
- A pair of 5s, no 6s, one 1.
- A pair of 4s, no 8s.
- A pair of 2s, no 1s, no 8s, one 9.

Last month's solutions

Five words

SLAVE, LOPED, APING,
VENUE, EDGED

Cryptotext

I would say to the house, as I said to those who have joined this Government; I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat.

Winston Churchill.

Four of everything

	a	b	c	d	e	f	
A	8	1	4	7	3	1	24
B	7	4	3	9	2	4	29
C	9	8	5	6	5	7	40
D	1	2	1	2	4	5	15
E	3	5	6	9	6	7	36
F	2	9	8	6	3	8	36
	30	29	27	39	23	32	

Wandering Words

[illegible]

Acknowledgments

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American Power Conversion for the supply of six uninterruptible power supplies for the Group's Communications Centre.

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Microsoft Australia for many years of contributions and support.

SONY Australia for the supply of equipment for *PC Update* production.

Symantec Australia for many years of contributions and support.

Monthly meeting

All members and guests welcome

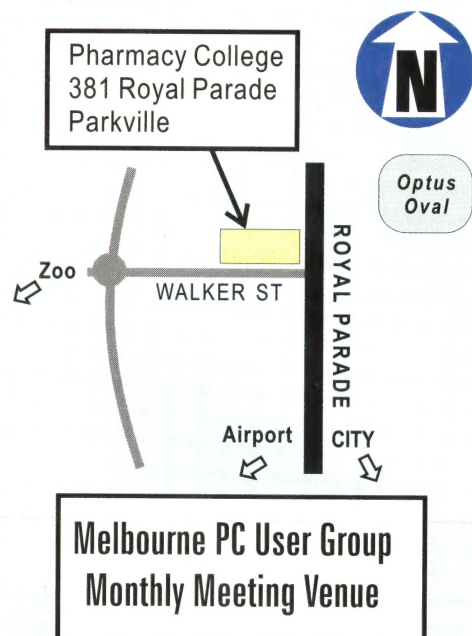
**Pharmacy College
381 Royal Parade
Parkville**

**6.00 pm
First Wednesday
each month
except January**

An average of over 500 members and guests attend our monthly meetings, which provide an excellent forum to introduce and release new products to those who are both users and decision-makers.

Meetings are arranged around planned themes. Members or presenters who are able to assist or contribute are invited to contact the convener.

Stan Johnstone
Meetings convener
and administrator
Phone: (03) 9578 3091 BH
e-mail: stanj@melbpc.org.au



Next meeting: 4 November

Cybec: Anti-Virus Software for all Platforms
3-Com: More connected — The Need for Speed at the Edge of the Network

Plus:

- The usual giveaways and raffle
- Random access (your chance to get answers to unsolved problems)
- Club news from the President
 - Shareware library sales
 - Socialising

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Membership

Do you have a problem thinking of gifts for family, friends or colleagues?

The next time you're stuck, why not give them memberships in Melb PC?

PC Update, BBS, SIGs, Training, Internet, Intranet, Dial Help, Monthly Meetings, Shareware, First Aid ... all this and growing.

Anyone who uses a PC will benefit from membership of Melb PC.



Eldorado

- Intel Celeron 300A CPU
- 128K cache
- Gigabyte EX chipset
- 32M SDRAM
- 2.5G ultra IDE HDD
- 1.44M FDD
- 8M Intel i740 AGP video card
- 15" Hyundai monitor
- 32X CD-ROM drive
- 16-bit Plug n Play sound card
- Pair of speakers
- Logitech mouse & pad
- 104 keyboard
- choice of desk-top or mini-tower case
- 33.6K fax/modem
- Windows 98
- Vet anti-virus software

\$1895

Merlin P-II

- Intel Pentium II 333 CPU
- Gigabyte BX chipset
- 32M SDRAM
- 5.1G ultra IDE HDD
- 1.44M FDD
- 8M Intel i740 AGP video card
- 15" Hyundai monitor
- 32X CD-ROM drive
- SB Ensoniq PCI sound card
- Pair of speakers
- Microsoft mouse & pad
- 104 keyboard
- choice of ATX desk-top or mini-tower case
- 56K fax/modem
- Windows 98
- Vet anti-virus software

\$2495

Excalibur P-II

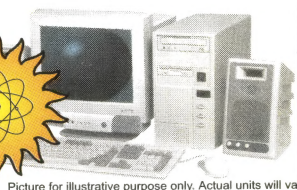
- Intel Pentium II 400 CPU
- Gigabyte BX chipset
- 64M 100MHz SDRAM
- 5.1G ultra IDE HDD
- 1.44M FDD
- 8M Intel i740 AGP video card
- 15" Hyundai monitor
- 32X CD-ROM drive
- SB Ensoniq PCI sound card
- Pair of speakers
- Microsoft mouse & pad
- 104 keyboard
- choice of ATX desk-top or mini-tower case
- 56K fax/modem
- Windows 98
- Vet anti-virus software

\$3195

TECS on-site computer service

Do you have a sick computer in need of some attention? It's out of warranty and you don't know anyone you can trust? Afraid of unplugging all those cables to take the system to your nearest shop and then having to remember which plug goes where when you get it back? Why not give TECS a call? We can service most IBM compatible PC's on your premises, expertly and efficiently. We can also provide networking solutions. You know that TECS is one name you can TRUST.

Call your local TECS store for details!



Picture for illustrative purpose only. Actual units will vary.

TECS HOT PRODUCTS

MEMORY

8M 72pin FPM	\$29
8M 72pin EDO	\$25
16M 72pin FPM	\$49
16M 72pin EDO	\$39
32M 72pin FPM	\$95
32M 72pin EDO	\$75
32M SDRAM	\$80
64M SDRAM	\$175
64M 100MHz SDRAM	\$205
128M SDRAM	\$380
128M 100MHz SDRAM	\$395

IDE HARD DRIVES

2.5G Quantum	\$249
3.2G Quantum	\$285
4.3G Maxtor	\$305
5.1G Quantum	\$339
6.4G IBM	\$385
7.6G Quantum	\$469
8.4G IBM	\$490
10G IBM	\$575
12.9G IBM	\$795
16.8G IBM	\$995

CPU's

IDT C6-225MX	\$115
IBM/Cyrix 6x86-233MX	\$125
IBM/Cyrix 6x86-266MX	\$169
IBM/Cyrix 6x86-300MX	\$189
IBM/Cyrix 6x86-333MX	\$269
AMD K6-300	\$269
K6-2-300 3D	\$289
Intel Celeron 300A Mendocino	\$389
Intel Pentium II 333	\$599
Intel Pentium II 350	\$739
Intel Pentium II 400	\$1279
Intel Pentium II 450	\$1779

MOTHERBOARDS

Gigabyte SIS AGP AT 512K	\$169
Gigabyte AX ALI ATX 512K	\$179
Gigabyte T2 AT 512K	\$165
Gigabyte TX3 AT 512K	\$185
Gigabyte ATX2 ATX 512K	\$185
Gigabyte LX3 ATX	\$225
Gigabyte BX AT	\$279
Gigabyte BX ATX	\$279
Gigabyte BX ATX SCSI	\$495

Upgrade Special!

Upgrade your current system to 6x86-PR233MX with 32M of RAM and 2M S3 Virge video card.*

- IBM/Cyrix 6x86-PR233MX CPU
- Gigabyte SIS chipset 512K cache motherboard
- 32M 10nS SDRAM
- 2M S3 Virge PCI video card

Price including installation

\$439

CD-ROM drives



Are you still struggling with slow 4X or 8X speed drives? Why not upgrade to a fast 32X speed and get the most out of your computer?

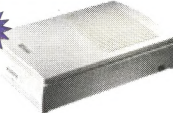
\$109

Colour flatbed scanner

Specifications:

- A4 size
- Up to 30-bit true colour scanning
- Scan from 75 to 9600DPI!
- Fast single pass scanning
- TWAIN compatible
- Parallel Port interface. Ideal for notebooks!

\$139



Fly Video II TV tuner / capture card

Get ready for Microsoft Web TV for Windows with this card and Windows 98! Watch TV on your PC monitor, even while you're using other software applications. Receive other information, such as Web pages, multimedia files, and software upgrades over the broadcast airwaves.

\$149

LS-120 disk drives

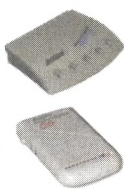
Features:

- 80 times the capacity and 5 times the speed of conventional 1.44M floppy drives.
- Read / write compatible with standard 1.44M and 720K diskettes.
- Each LS-120 diskettes will hold 120M of data. Ideal for storing large download files from the internet.
- Industry standard ATAPI IDE interface.

LS-120 diskettes: **\$19.95**

\$175

Modems



Deluxe AT computer case



Much sturdier than your average cases! Built to last!

Most of our systems are assembled using these cases.

\$79



\$85

Colour Monitors

KTX 33.6k int.	\$79
KTX 33.6K ext.	\$95
KTX 56K int.	\$115
KTX 56K ext.	\$129
Banksia 33.6K int.	\$105
Banksia 33.6K ext.	\$180
Banksia 56K ext.	\$245
Netcomm 33.6K int.	\$99
Netcomm 56K int.	\$135
Netcomm 56K ext. Ultra	\$279

3 year manufacturer's on-site warranty on all Daewoo, Hyundai and LG monitors!



14" Daewoo 1427X1	\$259
15" Daewoo 518B	\$335
15" hyundai 5854	\$329
15" LG 55i	\$329
15" LG 57i	\$419
15" Sony 100ES	\$599
17" Daewoo 1707b	\$665
17" Hyundai	\$775
17" Sony 200GS	\$1375
19" Viewmaster .26dp	\$1079

Networking solutions

Whether you're looking for solutions to home or office networking, TECS can provide you with the necessary hardware. Here is a small sample of the type of items we can offer

2m CAT5 UTP cable	\$7.50	D-Link combo ISA	\$35.00
2m CAT5 UTP x-over cable	\$9.95	Kingston combo ISA	\$55.00
2m BNC ethernet cable	\$7.50	D-Link combo PCI	\$40.00
10m BNC ethernet cable	\$14.95	Compex combo PCI	\$50.00
8 port 10 base RJ45 hub	\$99.00	Kingston combo PCI	\$55.00
16 port 10 base RJ45 hub	\$229.00	Compex 100 base PCI	\$80.00
5 port 100 base hub	\$269.00	Intel EEPPro 10/100 PCI	\$115.00
24 port 10/100 switching hub	\$2375.00	D-Link 10/100 print server	\$555.00

GUARANTEED LOWEST PRICES ON NOTEBOOKS

Twinhead, Toshiba, Wisetek, Mitac, Dual Technologies, IBM, Hewlett Packard



The Electronic & Computer Stores

Internet web address: www.tecs.com.au

City: 305 Latrobe St.

Coburg: 311 Sydney Rd.

Clayton: Cnr. Blackburn & Wellington Rds.

Blackburn: 88 South Pde.

Ph:(03)9602-3499 Fax:(03)9642-8551

Ph:(03)9383-7511 Fax:(03)9383-7896

Ph:(03)9562-9501 Fax:(03)9562-9261

Ph:(03)9877-7071 Fax:(03)9877-7081

Prices and specifications subject to change without notice. E